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This Month's *ENCOUNTER:—*

STILL THE DISMAL SCIENCE?

WE ARE constantly torn between two persuasions. One is that economics is the most important of modern studies, and that it is the duty of every literate person to be conversant with its affairs. The other is that economics is a subject of no great utility though possibly of academic interest, and is best left to the specialists who have a peculiar liking for it. Both of these sentiments have been reinforced by the learned and impassioned controversy over Soviet economics that we have published in this magazine during the past seven months, and which we continue in this month's ENCOUNTER with M. Bertrand de Jouvenel's calm and judicious article. It has all seemed so terribly important, and at the same time so terribly inconclusive. There is, it appears, considerable disagreement among the experts as to just how fast Soviet industry is growing (though there is also agreement that Soviet agriculture and transportation "lag behind"). Some, like Mr. Colin Clark, believe that, in view of its abundant natural resources and huge labour supply, the Soviet performance has been much less noteworthy than that of many other countries in the West, and has, moreover, been achieved at a human cost that is beyond reckoning. Mr. Peter Wiles, in contrast, while conceding (and deploring) the human cost, insists that his calculations show a rate of economic progress that far outstrips the West; and he even foresees the possibility that in a few decades the Soviet Union will be in a position to offer its citizens—should the planners decide to do so—a standard of living superior to that in the West. Both of these gentlemen are scholars, and both have figures to support their respective cases. The figures differ, of course, as do the various statistical operations that are performed upon them, since these reflect divergent hypotheses about the inner workings of the Soviet economy. Hence the conflicting results.

What are we, the bystanders, to make of it all? Are we to remain suspended in frowning perplexity, wondering whether Soviet output per man-hour is increasing at 4 per cent a year or 7·5 per cent a year, and wondering further how this compares with the net increase of German output, or British, or American (about which there is no unanimity either)? Just how weighty is this matter, anyway? The very question has an air of philistinism, and our inclination is quickly to suppress it. Yet ought we not, perhaps, to resist this inclination? Let the Soviet scholars do their work, by all means, and let them do it earnestly, as scholars should. But it may be time to say that this whole issue, though interesting, is not very important after all.

It is not important because the conflict between Communism and the free world has nothing to do with economics. This sounds heretical; but it is not only true, it is obvious. If by the end of this century every Russian can boast three refrigerators while every Englishman has only two, will this convert the people of England to a belief in the desirability of a totalitarian state on the Marxist pattern? And if by that time every American has a helicopter while the Russian has to make do with a mere automobile, will that convert the Russians to a philosophy of free enterprise? Clearly, that is *not* the way things happen. Wealth, like power, corrupts; but, even in this ice age of ours, a nation does not sell its soul for a deep freeze.

AH, IT will be said, this may hold true for the countries of the West, where it is only a question of comparative prosperity. But what about Asia? There the issue is one of poverty—and not any comparative poverty either, but hunger and dispossession that are acute, enduring, and intolerable. The people of these nations are determined to lift their standards of living up to Western levels, and they will elect for that political and social system which promises to raise them most in the least time. They are in the position of potential customers, before whom the various possible socio-economic systems are putting on a show, and they will buy that one which seems to promise the best performance.

But is this really an accurate description of the situation? Even on the surface, there is a flagrant self-contradiction. For the one thing that Communism *cannot* offer is quick relief for present poverty; on the contrary, it explicitly demands even greater sacrifices, all for the presumptive benefit of future genera-

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tions and to the certain disadvantage of the living. One would expect the Asian, if he were the economic man so many people think he is, to reject this proposition out of hand. If he does not—as in fact he does not—it is for reasons that have nothing to do with economics.

No, the real issue goes far beyond economics—so far beyond, that one is almost tempted to call it metaphysical. With the help of modern technology, there are many cures for poverty, as there are many causes; none of these cures is easy and painless, whether it be some form of state socialism, a "mixed economy," or unbridled laissez-faire. Any of these will work, given the will to make it work. What transports the whole issue beyond the realm of economics is that the particular choice of totalitarian Communism, with its militant orthodoxy and inquisitorial repression, would never occur to a person who was merely shopping around for solutions to *economic* problems. What Communism does seem to satisfy, and this is the secret of its appeal, is a quasi-religious longing for certainty in truth and rational order in society, and a quasi-religious rejection of all other Western systems as decadent, faltering, and dissension-ridden. What the West needs to worry about is not the statistics of Soviet economic growth but the spiritual and moral quality of its own way of life. It is not output per-man-hour we need concern ourselves with, so much as our palpable deficiency of self-assurance and self-confidence —of faith in ourselves, in short. One can almost say that this uneasy fascination with Soviet statistics — in an England and an America more prosperous than ever before in its history—is more disturbing than anything such statistics could ever reveal.

NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS:—

ROY JENKINS is Member of Parliament (Labour) for the Stetchford division of Birmingham, and author of *Mr. Balfour's Poodle*. . . . HENRY FAIRLIE writes the weekly political commentary in *The Spectator*. His long-awaited book on "The Establishment" will be published later this spring. . . . BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL, author of the monumental study, *Power*, has just had published in Paris a companion volume, *De La Souveraineté*. . . . MICHAEL HAMBURGER's forthcoming book on modern German writers is coming out in the autumn. . . . STUART HAMPSHIRE, Fellow of All Souls, will henceforth be contributing reviews regularly to ENCOUNTER. . . . C. A. R. CROSLAND, economist and former Labour M.P., has just completed a major study of British socialism which will be published this summer. . . . MRS. VIJAYA LAKSHMI PANDIT is High Commissioner for India in London. . . . LAWRENCE ALLOWAY is the Assistant Director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts. . . . ANDREW FORGE is a painter who has contributed art criticism to *The Times* and *The Listener*. . . . JOHN RUSSELL is art critic of the *Sunday Times*. . . . ADRIAN STOKES's most recent publication is *Michelangelo: a study in the nature of art*. . . . RODRIGO MOYNIHAN is Professor of Painting at the Royal College of Art. . . . The art books supplement as a whole was prepared by DAVID SYLVESTER.

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LONGMANS

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A Genius for Compromise?

A Debate on the British Party System

I. ROY JENKINS

TWENTY years ago it was widely feared that the major parties were too far apart for the healthy working of the parliamentary system. The Conservatives governed with an immense majority and little respect for the opinions of the uncommitted centre. The Labour Party, recovering slowly from the cataclysmic mood which had followed its 1931 disaster, still appeared too extreme and doctrinaire for many voters who had nothing for which to thank the National Government. At the General Election of 1935, after the four worst slump years in British history, only 158 Labour M.P.s were elected. Numerically, they formed the third weakest Opposition since 1832.

The prognosis was as bad as the existing situation. Were the unexpected to happen and the Labour Party to gain a majority, the strains which might be imposed upon the delicate mechanism of the parliamentary system would be greater than it could bear. The British people would no longer be sufficiently agreed upon fundamentals to be able, in Arthur Balfour's words, "safely to bicker." Deep economic cleavage between the parties inevitably threatened the continuance of the British parliamentary tradition. Power would no longer be able to pass smoothly from one group to the other and back again. The theory of the liberal state would cease to apply.

Professor Harold Laski was perhaps the best-known proponent of these views, but there were many others, on the Right as well as on the Left, who shared his pessimism. Either because its appeal was too narrow or because its aims were too extreme, the Labour Party looked a most ineffective replacement for the Liberal Party as a component of a smoothly-working two-party system.

Today these fears are dead. In their place have arisen new and quite different ones. Concern has recently been felt about the party system, not because the parties are too far apart, but because they are too close together. A growing identity of view between the two front benches has been charged with taking the interest out of the 1955 General Election. Mr. R. H. S. Crossman has proclaimed his theory of the L-shaped parliamentary battle, in which the present struggles are rarely straightforward ones between the two sides of the House, but more often take the form of both front benches and the whole of the Labour Party against a group of Tory back-benchers below the gangway, as on the Suez issue, or of both front benches and the whole of the Tory party against the Bevanites, as on the defence programme or German rearmament. Mr. Henry Fairlie has been determined to see the cloying influence of the "establishment" upon the leading men of both parties; and many others have sighed for a time when the major parties offered a clearer choice to the voter and politics were more exciting.

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SOME of the premises of this point of view are indisputable. No one will deny that politics have in recent years been unusually dull, or that the most vigorous disputes have often been within rather than between the parties. But what follows from this? Is it that the Labour Party—it seems a natural and perhaps justifiable assumption that the responsibility for the pace of political controversy rests primarily upon the Opposition—should have seen its first task as the deliberate widening of the gap of disagreement? Some, both inside and outside the Labour Party, would certainly answer yes and would, I think, defend their attitude upon some or all of three different grounds. They might claim that the Labour Party's electoral appeal would have been significantly stronger if its leaders had disagreed with the Government as strongly and at as many points as did its most extreme members. They might further claim that to have allowed the party to move into this position would have been to make it more "democratic" in the sense that it would have been more responsive to the mood of many of its most ardent supporters. And, most importantly, they might argue that, had it so acted, it would have better fulfilled its constitutional duty. The job of an Opposition, this argument would assume, is to be different from the Government and to offer the voter the sharpest of choices. This is not to suggest, it should perhaps be added, that there are not people who would like the Labour Party to be more left-wing for the simple and different reason that they believe in more left-wing policies. But what we are considering here is whether others, who were dominant in the party, would have served it and the nation better if they had subordinated their own beliefs to achieve a deliberate widening of the political gap.

The first argument—that a more extreme position would have enabled the Labour Party to poll more votes—is one which can never be put to the proof. There are no laws of politics which enable the effects of shifts of policy upon voters' attitudes to be predicted with confidence; and there are always too many variables in the situation for satisfactory comparisons to be made. As a result, those who wanted a more extreme policy for its own sake will always argue that it would have brought out many of the potential Labour supporters who did not trouble to go to the polls, while those who were in any event satisfied with the existing approach believe that a different one would have frightened away many marginal voters. Nor is it possible to deduce much from the individual results of particular candidates. Although there was more variation from constituency to constituency in 1955 than in the great mass plebiscites of 1950 and 1951, the differences followed no recognisable Left-Right pattern. The combined national impression produced by the party was more important for the individual candidate than his own particular views. If potential voters refrained from voting Labour because the party was too moderate, they did so just as much in Mr. Bevan's constituency as anywhere else. If marginal supporters were frightened away by the "wild men on the Left," this fear made them as reluctant to vote for Mr. Morrison as for some of the "wild men" themselves.

We are therefore moving in a befogged area. But it can, I think, be said that most of the issues on which the Labour Party had been invited to be more extreme by some of its members were singularly lacking in interest for the bulk of the electorate. German rearmament, the dispute about which had convulsed the party for the eighteen months before the election, evinced far less notice from the voters than did, say, the question of monopolistic practices and the existence of private trade courts. Proposals for further nationalisation were, throughout the country as a whole, greeted with an indifference that was still more complete. Areas which would have been particularly affected by the rather vague proposal for the public ownership of the chemical industry perhaps constituted an exception; but it would be very difficult indeed to argue that, in these areas, Labour candidates benefited from the interest which was aroused. Much the most likely result of an extended list of similar

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nationalisation proposals would have been, in the context of 1955, the embarrassment of Labour candidates over a wider geographical area.

Nor is there a shred of historical evidence for the view that Left-wing parties poll better when they are in a more extreme mood. The experience of the Labour Party in the early thirties has already been mentioned. There was no alleged front-bench collusion to cast its shadow over the General Election of 1935, but there was both a lower percentage poll (indicating, presumably, a greater apathy) and a much more disappointing result for the Labour Party than in 1955. Later in the thirties, on the evidence of the by-election results, the position of the Opposition strengthened considerably, although not to such an extent that there could have been any certainty of a Labour victory at the General Election which, without the war, could not have been postponed beyond 1940. But this strengthening coincided with a sharp move away from the cataclysmic extremism of the early thirties. *The Immediate Programme*, with its clear and sober list of limited objectives, was adopted in 1937 and replaced the vague hopes (or threats) of socialism-in-a-weekend which had been present three or four years before. Mr. Morrison and Mr. Dalton became the dominant influences upon Labour Party policy, and they were united in determined hostility to Left-wing electoral alliances and in a desire to achieve results rather than to strike attitudes. Mr. Dalton's significantly entitled book, *Practical Socialism for Britain*, had been published in 1934, when it was before its time; but it was a harbinger of the developing pragmatism of the party in the later thirties. If, the war apart, the Labour Party was on the road to victory after 1935, it was not because, in the commonly accepted sense of the term, it was becoming more Left-wing.

Evidence from the history of the Liberal Party should perhaps be handled with still more care. But for what it is worth, it points in the same direction. Mr. Gladstone is always said to have become more Left-wing as he became older; but his concentration upon Home Rule, while it widened the gap between the parties, certainly did nothing to improve the electoral appeal of the Liberal Party. At the beginning of 1885, with the third Reform Bill passed into law, it was widely and confidently assumed that a prospect of almost perpetual Liberal power was opening up. There began instead a twenty-year period in which the Conservatives, with their Unionist allies, held office for all but three and a half years. Furthermore, when this long Conservative hegemony at last came to an end with the crushing defeat of 1906, the Liberal Party which inflicted the defeat was one which had been moving slightly towards the centre for the previous five years. The Liberal Imperialists — Asquith, Grey, and Haldane—who had been detached from the leadership during the Boer War had moved back into full communion with the bulk of the party.

It would therefore be very rash to assume that extremism is, in general, a vote-winning quality for a Left-wing party. It would, indeed, be very strange if this were so. The strangeness can be clearly illustrated by considering how manifestly invalid is the same proposition when applied to the party of the Right. Macaulay claimed that the rôle of Toryism was "the defence of Whig achievements of the previous generation"; and it would be difficult to deny that the acceptance of a large part of these achievements (interpreting Whig so as to cover any radical movement), and in a period which is usually much shorter than a generation, has long been an essential ingredient in Tory electoral success. Sir Robert Peel had to accept much of the new political order which was created by the first Reform Bill and the subsequent changes of the early 1830s before he could establish a majority Tory Government in 1841. Disraeli abandoned protection and made other tacks to the Left before he could re-create a base for Conservatism in the sixties and seventies. Bonar Law, Birkenhead, and Austen Chamberlain recanted, in the days of the Lloyd George coalition, most of the unyielding attitudes which they had adopted

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towards pre-1914 Liberal reforms, and in consequence made it far easier for the Conservative Party to return to independent power in 1922 and 1924.

After 1945 the Conservative Party again faced the same problem. Should it stand simply for a return to pre-1939 conditions, with, its supporters might hope, their less attractive features obscured by the veil of the war years? Or should it accept at least the bare framework of the wartime and post-war reforms, recognising that the world of 1939 had gone for ever? This, in essence, was the struggle which was waged within the Conservative Party in the late forties, with Mr. Butler emerging as the victorious protagonist of accepting the world around him.

No one would deny that Mr. Butler's victory greatly aided the Tory electoral appeal, both in 1951 and in 1955. He conciliated the centre and took the sting out of much of the Labour attack. As has been written in the Nuffield College Survey of the 1955 campaign: "The Labour Party could no longer be so genuinely terrified of a Tory victory." If, on the other hand, Mr. Butler had lost, if Lord Woolton had been free to rally the Conservative businessmen behind the policy of crude return to the conditions of the thirties, can anyone doubt that this would either have extended the Labour Party's period of office, or at least made more short-lived the Conservatives' return to office? And why, if extremism is so manifestly vote-losing for the Tories, should it be assumed that it is clearly vote-winning for the Labour Party? Both parties achieve their victories by the temporary capture of the uncommitted centre.

THE first argument in favour of a deliberate widening of the gap between the parties is therefore, to say the least, open to considerable doubt. The second is that more extreme parties would more accurately reflect the views of their own rank and file, and would thus be more responsively "democratic." The party leaders, this argument assumes, are continually trying to lead their followers towards the centre. They are drawn that way, it is suggested, both by the enervating *camaraderie* of the House of Commons and by their own eagerness for office. (This latter consideration, it may be noted, is in direct contradiction to the whole basis on which the first argument was constructed.)

What validity is there here? In the first place, it is probably true that, in practice at least, the leaders of both parties are a little more moderate than the bulk of their parliamentary followers, and that these Members of Parliament are, in turn and in general, a little more moderate than the bulk of their keenest supporters in the country. This is an inevitable result not only of the politician's thoroughly respectable desire to win and to hold a wider range of support, but also of the normal human reaction to responsibility. A close contact with events almost inevitably brings a greater appreciation of difficulties and a greater willingness to compromise than does a more detached position. This is not only an *a priori* proposition. It can be given empirical support from the careers of innumerable politicians of widely differing characters. Joseph Chamberlain, John Morley, Lloyd George, and Stafford Cripps are as disparate a quartet as it is easy to imagine; yet all four of these men of the Left (in Chamberlain's case I am dealing with his pre-1886 career) reacted to high office in the expected way. From the Right, Bonar Law, who had been a violent Leader of the Opposition, F. E. Smith, and Sir Winston Churchill (in his post-1945 phase) provide similar examples. It is therefore useless to believe that the problem could be solved by each party insisting upon the election or appointment of more intractable leaders. Indeed the evidence suggests that the more fire-eating politicians appear while they are without power, the greater is the change which its attainment is likely to effect in them. Lord Attlee would never have been elected leader of the Labour Party, as was Ramsay MacDonald, because the newly arrived Clydeside M.P.s wanted more militancy on the front bench and more magnetism on the platform. But Attlee's true political position, as he showed throughout his long period of leadership, was well to the Left, not only of MacDonald, but of many

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others of greater apparent militancy as well. His whole career suggests that if you want a man who will not compromise too much in office you should choose someone who is a moderate to begin with. Arthur Henderson in the Labour Party and Campbell-Bannerman in the Liberal Party were both men of roughly similar stamp to Attlee in this respect, and their careers provide further evidence for this point of view.

A certain centripetal tendency on the part of political leaders is therefore inevitable, and deliberate attempts to counteract it by choosing different leaders, would, on the basis of past experience, be likely to make it more rather than less pronounced. But is it undesirable as well as inevitable? Would it be preferable for political leaders to mirror directly the views and prejudices of their own most militant supporters in the country? It is not an easy question to answer. No one should underestimate the vital part played in British politics, at least in the Labour Party, by such people. They do unattractive jobs for no reward and little glory. They supply the enthusiasm without which a political party, if it is poor, is creaking and inefficient, and if it is rich, is soulless. They are the political élite of the electorate, and they set an example of political consciousness which, if it were followed, would make apathy an unnecessary fear. But political enthusiasts are by their very nature not typical of the great bulk of the electorate. If they were they would not be enthusiastic. Yet a political party clearly owes a duty to the millions who vote for it as well as to the thousands who work for it. No party which slavishly followed the wishes of its own enthusiasts but ignored the views of its main support would be doing its constitutional duty or serving the interests of any obvious theory of "democracy." Such a conflict of loyalties is perfectly possible. The evidence of the Gallup polls, for instance, suggests that on most of the issues of the past three or four years on which the Labour leadership was accused of being out of touch with its own rank and file, the attitude of the leadership was broadly in accord with that of the majority of the Labour voters. In the days when the constituency Labour Parties refused to elect either Mr. Gaitskell or Mr. Morrison to the National Executive Committee but returned Mr. Bevan in the top place, nearly twice as many Labour voters said they wanted a "Right-wing" successor to Mr. Attlee as wanted Mr. Bevan to succeed.

THE question of democratic responsibility in a party is therefore a complex one. There may be circumstances in which the leadership is at variance with the militants but in which the militants are equally at variance with the mass support. Who, then, is out of touch?

It is natural to argue this question in terms of the Labour Party, for the Labour Party brought into British politics the theory of a democratic party in which the leadership should be under the firm control of the rank and file. The Conservative Party has never rested itself upon this theory, although it may be that in recent years the Tory annual conference has come to exercise a little more influence. But it is nevertheless not unreasonable to ask, as part of the argument, whether politics in this country would have been healthier in the past few years if the Conservative workers in the constituencies had been given their heads. If all the bitterness against equalitarianism, against the Welfare State, and against control from Whitehall which accumulated at this level during the Labour government had been allowed fully to express itself in the policy of the Tory government, we should have been well back towards the conditions of the thirties; and the whole mechanism of consent in politics would have been severely strained. One of the few issues on which the chairmen and secretaries of the constituency associations were allowed to override the views of the Conservative Ministers was the comparatively minor one of the salaries of Members of Parliament. The narrow bitterness which was there displayed gives some indication of what might have happened had a similar influence been exercised over a wider field. From a Left-wing point of view, Mr. Butler may

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have been bad enough; but there were far worse forces behind him, and there is clearly something to be said for the centripetal tendencies which allowed him to keep them under some measure of control.

All this does not amount to an argument either for unrestrained centripetalism or for the complete autonomy of parliamentary parties. MacDonald believed in both and did nearly a generation's harm not only to the Labour Party but to British politics as a whole. It is an argument for a balance of forces, which is what exists within the Labour Party at the present time. On the one hand, the enthusiasts of the constituency parties act as the guardians of the party's idealism and set fairly strict limits to areas within which compromise may take place. On the other, the leadership, fortified by the power of the trades unions and the privileges of Members of Parliament, is able to temper idealism with realism and to seek to widen the basis of support. It is a successful balance when, as is often but not always the case, both sides recognise the value and rights of the other.

THE third argument for a wider gap between the parties rests on the view that the duty of the Opposition is to oppose, and that to the extent that it refrains from doing so it is failing to offer to the electorate a sufficiently sharp choice. But the duty of the Opposition, it can equally well be claimed, is to become the government at the earliest possible moment. Failure to behave in a way compatible with this duty can be still more destructive of the electorate's right of choice than failure to oppose. Let us look at the problem in specific terms. At the present time, both major parties accept a foreign policy based upon the Atlantic Alliance. In doing so they are, I believe, giving expression to the wishes of a substantial majority of the electors. But it is undeniably the case that there is a sizeable minority which does not accept this policy. The opposition of this minority may be based upon pacifism, or chauvinism, or a fellow-travelling attitude towards Russia, or a combination of two or more of these outlooks. They would prefer neutralism or even an overtly pro-Soviet orientation. The Labour Party, by taking a violent swing away from the foreign policy of Ernest Bevin, could undoubtedly have widened the gap between itself and the Tories and could have offered to this minority both a more stimulating choice and the certainty of much larger representation for its point of view in the House of Commons. Apart from the merits of the question, would it by so doing have increased the reality of the choice offered to the electorate as a whole? The answer is surely no, because such a reorientation would have immensely narrowed the party's basis of appeal, would have forced it back into being a small party of protest, and would have condemned it to the best part of a generation of opposition. By the more complete acceptance of a duty to oppose, the party would have neglected its duty to offer an effective alternative to the government of the day. One or two million voters might have been offered the clearer choice which they wanted, but the electorate as a whole would have been left with the virtual certainty of one-party government.

Is this not an argument against the two-party system as a whole, it may next be asked? Could minority groups not be adequately represented, without any such danger of one-party hegemony, if a wider variety of parties were to be encouraged? In theory this would no doubt be possible, although it is not clear how this "encouragement" could be given, for the party system is far more a product of political tradition and social structure than of electoral arrangements or other institutional devices. Neutralist socialists, chauvinist conservatives, and all sorts of other groups might then find separate representation in Parliament. But would the elector, as a result, be offered a more meaningful choice when he came to cast his vote? There is plenty of comparative experience, from France and some other countries, to suggest that the direct choice of a party, a policy, and a Prime Minister, even if only an approximate choice, is more effectively democratic than is an exact choice of a particular group

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which then has to bargain behind the scenes over both policies and persons before a government can emerge.

At the same time the rigidity of the British system should not be exaggerated. There is no ban on small parties outside the two principal ones. They exist, they can even persist over many years, as the Communist Party has done; and no doubt if the Labour Party were to swing too far to the right its defection would be reflected in an increased measure of support for the Communists. Nor should it ever be forgotten that, within the lifetime of three-quarters of the people now voting, the "impossible" occurred: one of the two great parties in the state was effectively destroyed and replaced by a newly-emerging political force; and what the Labour Party did to the Liberal Party could (and would rightly) be done to the Labour Party itself if it were to become equally irrelevant to the needs of the radicals of the day. But if one of the two major parties were to deviate too far to the periphery for the bulk of its supporters, it is more doubtful whether a centre party could ever provide an equally effective corrective. Centre parties have never had a happy or successful existence in England. From the Peelites through the Liberal Unionists to the present-day Liberal rump their lives have been difficult and depressing.

Not one of the three reasons which are commonly advanced against a "moderate" opposition is therefore wholly valid. This is not to say that a wider gap between the parties than has appeared to exist in the past few years is not both likely and desirable. Nobody who had listened to the economic debates in the House of Commons in the past four years could believe that "Mr. Butskell" ever really existed outside the imagination of political writers and cartoonists. But he is certainly now dead, even for them, and is unlikely ever to be replaced. What has killed the mythical political figure has been a new political situation. The former Chancellor of the Exchequer after four successful years of having it both ways—full employment and the scrapping of controls, the Welfare State and lower taxation—was forced by the end of his terms-of-trade bonus to make choices; and in so doing he deeply offended the Labour Party and its supporters throughout the country. The political temperature, naturally and desirably, has therefore risen somewhat. This is very different from a deliberate attempt to create differences for their own sake, to strike attitudes against one's best beliefs for the sake of increasing political antagonism. This artificial manufacturing of political differences would be as self-defeating in its results as it is unnecessary in its conception.

Instead, it should be accepted that, from time to time, there are periods when the parties move rather closer together, and that there are even advantages in such a closing-up—provided that it does not last for too long. We have just passed through precisely the sort of period in which this development might have been expected. A Labour government left office after six years of secure power and revolutionary change. These six years exhausted both the immediate programme of the Labour Party and the appetite for change of the electorate. Not the least of the revolutionary changes which the six years effected was in the Conservative Party. It was forced to accept a new climate of opinion and to campaign on a policy of consolidation rather than of reaction. In these circumstances a period of quiet politics and blurred differences was both natural and inevitable. Indeed it would only have been avoided if the incoming Conservative government had been prepared to tear down every reform erected by the Labour Party. Then, indeed, the bogy of compromise and dullness would have been avoided. Then, indeed, there would have been no danger of the parties being too close together. But might not the price have been rather high? Might not such behaviour, if generalised, make the whole of politics a business of running very fast in order to stay in the same place?

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II. HENRY FAIRLIE

THE English "genius for compromise" is one of the fictions of the middle-class politicians and middle-class political writers who have dominated the discussion of politics in England since Palmerston died. (Palmerston was succeeded, not by Russell, as the history books say, but by Bagehot, and Bagehot has been succeeded by a whole line of editors of *The Economist*. This is the real cause of our present discontents.) Today the middle classes are fighting for their power. The public schools have established missions in the two main parties, and year by year they send their trained social workers to the House of Commons, where they may breathe to their less educated colleagues the last enchantments of the middle classes. Of all their incantations, this appeal to the supposed "genius for compromise" is the most potent, and when the abracadabra is uttered by a political Merlin, like Sir Ernest Barker, the spell is almost irresistible. To Sir Ernest and his apprentices, the "genius for compromise" is one expression of the English character, and the English character has been formed by the soft English landscape, the moist, temperate English climate, the grey English skies. The "genius for compromise" is the genius of the gulf-stream.

Perhaps it is because I come from the foothills of the Grampians that I do not believe a word of this. I do not believe that it was a "genius for compromise" which lopped off Charles I's head beneath the grey English skies, or which made Charles II hide himself in a moist English oak, or which mowed down the Peterloo agitators right in the middle of the gulf-stream. It was not a "genius for compromise" which forced the passage of the first Reform Bill, or which led to the outbreak of the South African War, or which compelled the reform of the House of Lords in 1911. During the bitter centuries from Drogheda to the Black and Tans, was it a "genius for compromise" which the English parties displayed in their government of Ireland? Was it by a "genius of compromise" that Lloyd George forced reluctant duchesses to lick stamps and Aneurin Bevan hounded equally reluctant general practitioners into the National Health Service? Or are they to be dismissed from the argument as Welshmen? If so, let us by all means confine our attention to those who have most obviously personified English virtues and consider what "genius for compromise" they have had. Judge Jeffreys, for example?

The plain fact is that the English political genius is a genius for conflict. (It should be said at once that the word "genius" covers not only the undoubted political skills and instincts which the English possess but also their sheer good luck.) The English have always succeeded in preserving the dialectic and then extracting a synthesis from it. As I shall argue below, this synthesis seems to me so remarkable that it is akin to a national will. But the process which produces the synthesis, which results in a policy which reflects the national mind or temper, owes nothing to compromise. On the contrary, the genius of the English political system—and today that means the two-party system—is that hitherto it has been able to discover and express the real tensions in society and the real conflict of ideas which these tensions produce; and that, as a result of the free play which is given to these competing forces, as the result of their action and reaction on one another, a wholly unexpected deposit of acts of policy is precipitated. Against the alchemy of the "genius for compromise," I put forward the chemistry of substances in solution, and I have no doubt which is the more appropriate in the middle of the 20th century.

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But before advancing my own thesis, let me examine one of the central arguments on which those who support the "genius for compromise" rest their case today. There is among us, apparently, someone who is the "uncommitted centre" voter, and it is to him that both parties must address their pleas and their policies. (The "genius for compromise," you will notice, is already taking on a rather shoddy look: instead of the almost mystical force which is represented in the works of Sir Ernest Barker, it has become nothing more than a ca'canny political tactic, designed to capture a million or so voters who cannot make up their minds.) This idea of the "uncommitted centre" is used for the most varied purposes. Mr. T. E. Utley, for example, has said that the balance between the two solid blocks of Conservative and Labour voters is "determined by a handful of marginal constituencies which in social composition are predominantly what we call lower-middle class. . . . These people, by the nature of their circumstances, tend to take a middle view on the great economic and social issues which, at the moment, confront us." Utley goes on to suggest that their influence is dangerous because they are the class which want *both* the advantages of the welfare state and low taxes.

The only trouble with the argument, which might otherwise provide a convincing explanation of Butlerism, is that it is based on a fiction. There is no evidence that the balance of electoral power lies peculiarly in the hands of the lower-middle class — incidentally, it would be interesting to know how Utley defines this category—or, indeed, of any other class. Even if one accepts for the moment the popular picture of a definite body of "floating" or "uncommitted" voters, there is no evidence that they are drawn from any one class or section of the population. Birch and Campbell, who conducted the Stretford survey at the 1950 general election, made a brave attempt to analyse the "floating" voter. As they themselves pointed out, their samples were so small as to make the possibilities of error higher than usual. Nevertheless, the results of their investigations seemed to justify the conclusion that "The floating voters of Stretford . . . are a fair cross-section of the electorate; neither in age, nor sex, nor social position do they differ from their fellow-voters. No justification is found for the fear that they might all be housewives, or old-age pensioners, or clerks under thirty."

Not only do such sample surveys as have been made confirm that "floating" voters are to be found in proportionate numbers in all classes and sections of the community, but there is also the outstanding fact that at the elections of 1950, 1951, and even 1955 the swing of electoral opinion was spread with remarkable uniformity across the whole country in constituencies of almost every type in every area—a most impressive demonstration of the country's political homogeneity. Utley suggests that of these constituencies the marginal ones are those which are predominantly lower-middle class in their social composition. This also is untrue, and the idea is probably a hangover from the excessive attention which was paid to the behaviour of dormitory constituencies between 1945 and 1950. But even if Utley's attempt to give the "floating" voter a specific class character is invalid, the more general idea of an "uncommitted centre" voter might still be true, and I do not deny that there may be a body of voters, of all classes, who, throughout their lives and whatever the circumstances, regularly change their party allegiance between elections. But the idea does not seem to me very helpful, and, if too much attention is paid to it, I am sure it can be definitely misleading.

Did the "uncommitted centre" swing back to the Conservatives between 1945 and 1950? If so, what of the voters who changed their allegiance between 1950 and 1951? Did they belong to something other than the "uncommitted centre"? Or, does the "uncommitted centre" have subsections? And was it just the "uncommitted centre" which transferred its allegiance between 1935 and 1945 and gave the Labour Party power for the first time in its existence, just the

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"uncommitted centre" which rallied to the National Government in 1931 and almost annihilated the Labour Party in Parliament, just the "uncommitted centre" which sent the Liberals back to office in 1906 with an overwhelming majority? Either the "uncommitted centre" is a designation so vague that it includes all voters who at any time change their party allegiance, or else it has to be admitted that, at the elections of 1906, 1918, 1931, and 1945, a large number of voters outside the "uncommitted centre" changed from one party to another. And if at those elections, why not, although in smaller numbers, at other elections as well? Whatever the reality behind the notion of the "uncommitted centre"—and, as I said, I am more than willing to admit that there may be some—it is surely obvious that it explains only part, and perhaps even an insignificant part, of the working of the electoral system in England.

Above all, there is no evidence that a party is more likely to win a general election by trimming to what it imagines to be views of this "uncommitted centre." Why should a significant number of voters change their allegiance if both parties are offering a middle course of action? This was not how Woolton rallied Conservative support in the country between 1945 and 1950. He made voters feel that, if a Conservative government were returned to power, things would be radically different. He led a crusade. The result was a dramatic increase in the Conservative total vote. It was exactly the feeling of participating in a crusade which was absent from the Labour campaign of 1955. The result was a dramatic drop in the Labour total vote which confounded the experts. Here, perhaps, is a far more significant fact about voting behaviour than the popular conception of the "floating" or "uncommitted" voter. It is an agents' truism that the party which will win an election is the party which can get most of its supporters to the polling booths. But this is not primarily a matter of party machinery. It is primarily a matter of a party's spirit. A party leader who excites his "committed" supporters need not worry over-much about the "uncommitted" voters. Against a crusading rank and file, the "uncommitted centre" cannot hold.

WHAT is it, then, that prevents English politics from going to extremes? What provides the centripetal impulse? For there is no doubt that this exists, and it is this, I suppose, which the theory of the "genius for compromise" is intended to explain. Part of the answer has already been hinted at: the political (reflecting an even deeper?) homogeneity of the English people. Although class and other vertical divisions, of course, have mattered and do matter, they have never been all that has mattered. Political questions have always divided the English horizontally; this was true even in the severest test of all, the Civil War, when the issue cut across social, economic, religious, and even territorial divisions. This is not the place to trace the process by which centuries of "hard royal administration" imposed a profound national unity which, even by the 17th century, had "destroyed the deeper provincial hatreds" and lessened the impact of religious ones. But it should be emphasised that this national unity provides the answers to most of the questions which people find baffling about English politics.

How does this unity or homogeneity affect the working of the party system in England today? John Bonham, using figures obtained by the British Institute of Public Opinion in the general elections of 1945, 1950, and 1951, has attempted to express in the most general terms the class basis of party support. There is no need to take his figures too literally, but they are valuable as a general indication of the proportions with which one is dealing. It seems clear from his figures that, in the three elections under examination, the Conservative Party managed to retain the support of at least one-third of the working-class electors actually voting, while the Labour Party could rely on some two million of the middle-class electors actually voting. Here is a far more remarkable *fact* about the working of English politics than the fancied exis-

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tence of an "uncommitted centre." If one sets beside it the equally remarkable *fact*, mentioned above, that such "floating" voters as there are are to be found in proportionate numbers in all sections of the community, a little light at last begins to shine. What keeps English parties from flying to extremes is not that they have to court the centre, but the fact that they have to court the nation.

But the nation makes its voice clear through an electoral system which deliberately exaggerates parliamentary majorities. Paradoxically this is why its voice is accurately recorded. The purpose of the electoral system is to reflect the national temper in the composition of the House of Commons. This is a quite different thing from reflecting the precise party affiliations of the electors at any given moment. The national temper exists apart from party divisions. If a large number of electors have decided to transfer their allegiance from the Conservatives to the Labour Party, it is a fair assumption that an even larger number of people, although they may still vote Conservative, are sensitive to and have, in different degrees, responded to the same influences. In short, the electors who actually change their votes between one election and the next are only the active agents of a change in the climate of opinion which stretches far wider and deeper, which, in fact, involves the whole electorate. It is, therefore, perfectly legitimate that every changed vote should carry more than its own weight in the final calculations at a general election, and it is this which the simple majority on a single ballot operating in single-member constituencies ensures. The electoral system in short does something far more subtle and far more valuable than merely record the rigid party divisions in the country and the behaviour of the few "floating" voters who occasionally cross them and the more numerous voters who decide to stay at home. It measures the significance of each vote or lost vote, and, as a result, any change in the composition of the House of Commons reflects the temper of those who have not changed their voting behaviour as well as of those who have.

THIS achievement of the electoral system which is, I believe, at the basis of the successful working of the English constitution today, may be subtle but it is not obscure. The single-member constituency has been one of the favourite targets of the electoral reformers. One of them, R. W. G. Mackay, has referred to it as "the fundamental weakness of our electoral machinery." It is, therefore, worth stressing what should be its obvious merits. It is impossible to divide a country with the kind of social structure which England has into constituencies of about 55,000 electors without there being between 100 and 200 constituencies, widely scattered over the country as a whole, which are so composed that they are sensitive to movements of every kind. They are, moreover, because of their varied composition, sensitive in different degrees. There are the genuinely marginal seats, which will register even the smallest shift of opinion; and there are seats which will change only if there is the kind of violent swing of opinion which occurred, for example, in 1931 and 1945. The precise size of these constituencies and the regular redrawing of their boundaries in order to achieve some artificial equality are of small importance compared with the one fact of the existence in a country as small as Britain of more than six hundred single-member constituencies. It is their number—which consequently dictates their approximate size—which matters. It ensures that in most parts of the country, and in parts which vary widely in character, there are a large number of seats capable of registering changes in public opinion in different social groups and in different proportions.

It is not possible here to trace the process by which the national temper is discovered and expressed through the two-party system as a whole: the ways in which changes of public opinion and of the national mood are filtered through the complicated machinery of the individual parties, which are themselves alliances of separate and even conflicting interests and opinions, in touch with widely varying sectors of the nation's life and manifestations of the nation's temper;

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the way in which Parliament, the nerve-centre of the whole system, acts as a remarkably sensitive stock exchange of opinion and reputation; the ways in which an important influence on the party system is exerted by the permanent national institutions—notably, the monarchy and the civil service—which are outside it, representing, as they do, aspects of the national temper which are excluded from the working of the party system. But I hope enough has been said to suggest that the two parties are, in the full sense of the term, national parties, not sectional interests or factions of opinion. They express, in different ways, the national mind or temper. Neither party can, like so many parties in Europe, cut itself off from either the national interest or national sentiments.

IT IS necessary to draw attention to another virtue of the electoral system in England. It is common knowledge that a comparatively small swing of votes is capable of transforming the composition of the House of Commons. This, among other things, has helped the critics of the system to represent its working as a gamble. It is a gamble, they say, because there is no clear relationship between seats and votes. It is just this which the new breed of psephologists, and particularly the psephologist extraordinary, D. E. Butler, have shown to be false. Butler's argument and his statistical illustration of it are fascinating, but here it is necessary to record only his conclusion that "the major parties seem likely to receive roughly equal and predictable treatment at the hands of the electoral system" if certain conditions are satisfied. He admits that not all these conditions have been or are satisfied at any given moment, but "hitherto the biases have cancelled each other out to a surprising extent. . . . No formula can be expected to relate votes cast and seats won without an appreciable margin of error. . . . Yet this error is not on a scale sufficient to justify the assertion that the British electoral system is a gamble. It does in fact work reasonably systematically."

Nevertheless, it does also exaggerate movements of public opinion. This is not only justifiable but it helps to explain the successful working of the system. It must be remembered that it is only very rarely, and then only in abnormal circumstances, that there is a swing of votes in the country between one election and the next which, if translated proportionately into a change of seats in the House of Commons, would be sufficient to alter its composition significantly. The stability of the great majority of English electors—even at the general election of 1931 the aggregate Labour vote was reduced by less than two million—which accounts for this, could easily cause political stagnation in the House of Commons. It is necessary that at periodic intervals the party composition of the House should be drastically altered, and the swing of votes in the country is, by itself, insufficient to ensure this. Hence the value of an electoral system which can convert a comparative stability of votes in the country into a comparative instability of governments in the House of Commons. No party—as was shown after 1931—is ever so remote from the possibility of office that it seeks extreme methods of gaining power; although, of course, the Labour Party's narrow escape from annihilation at that election did temporarily throw it off balance. Equally, no party can ever be so confident of retaining office that it loses touch with the springs of its power in the nation. The two-party system, in fact, keeps both parties tame. But it also keeps both parties alive.

THIS second function is as important as the first. The national will in a liberal state must be the product of tensions, of a lively responsiveness, even conflict, between opposing interests, beliefs, and desires. The two-party system helps to keep the tensions alive. It keeps the numerous forces at work in society playing on each other, acting, reacting, and interacting, and out of the process there emerges a will to act which bears as much relation to national needs and to the national consciousness as any fallible, imperfect, human system of government can be expected to provide. But the condition of suc-

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cess is that the two parties shall remain in clear opposition to each other. Occasionally—and it could be claimed that the past six years have been such a period—the issues which divide the parties are obscure, and it is impossible to foresee what will be the dividing issues ten or even five years hence. At these moments it is essential that the political devices and the party mythologies which keep alive the conflict between the two parties should be preserved. If the parties do not hide their personalities, they will behave truly; they will become again the two poles round which new alliances of thrusting interests and opinions group themselves.

The "genius for compromise," then, although it *appears* to explain the genius of the English political system, in fact explains it away. It is only one step from applauding the "genius for compromise" to advocating bipartisanship, and bipartisan policies, as such, form no part of the English political tradition. This does not mean that, especially in the field of foreign affairs, the two parties, drawing nourishment through their different roots in the national life, do not sometimes find themselves supporting the same policies. Britain, in fact, is the only country which voluntarily entered both the world wars and fought the whole way through them as a united nation and with the support of both the major parties. This remarkable fact is to be explained not by a "genius for compromise" but by the fact that, until the last moment and even beyond it, the two parties adhered firmly to their own attitudes. Until the moment of decision, the dialectic was preserved—not only between the two parties, but within them, as the stories of the Liberal Party before August 1914, and of the Conservative Party before September 1939, reveal. Then, when the moment of decision at last arrived, the synthesis was precipitated, the national will emerged.

I have no doubt at all that it was of vital importance that the opposition to German rearmament, which was strongly felt in all sections of society, was given expression by the Bevanites in the Labour Party. If they had been silenced, and it should be remembered that attempts were made to repress them, an important body of opinion would have been denied an outlet. In the end I think the decision which was taken by the two parties to support German rearmament reflected the national mind. I think that the great body of inarticulate working-class as well as middle-class opinion in the country accepted the need for the rearmament of the Germans. But if the question had not become a dividing issue (within one party, rather than between the two parties; it makes no difference) the decision would have been a false one. As a result of the Bevanite campaign, the eventual decision to rearm Germany was of a different quality than if the decision had been taken by the two front benches without any serious challenge. The Bevanites, throughout 1953 and 1954, drew on the mythology of their party. This was their value. A policy decision which is reached by ignoring a party's mythology has no validity. No one would deny the importance of national mythology and sentiment; a party's mythology and sentiment are important parts of each. The "genius for compromise" does not comprehend them.

As I suggested at the beginning of this article, there is today a danger that the two parties have entered into a silent conspiracy for the maintenance of the *status quo*. Laski's prophecy that, with the advent of the Labour Party to power, the British parliamentary system would prove unworkable because the main parties would no longer be agreed on the ends of political action has not only been proved wrong; the very reverse has happened. If Britain were a country no larger than Sweden, there would be no harm in her becoming a nation of social democratic zombies; if her industry were as unimportant to the world as Switzerland's, she could happily devote herself to the manufacture of cuckoo clocks; if she were not the centre of a world-wide Commonwealth, she could willingly contract and ossify; if she had not an Empire which is on the verge of developments and experiments as important as any in this

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century, she could accept the *status quo* and devote her political energies to buttressing it.

But if Britain is still a great power and, with the Commonwealth and Empire, potentially the greatest, if she is still the repository of a political experience which has been longer and wider and more fruitful than that enjoyed by any other country, there is ample reason for concern at her present political condition. I do not deny that some of her present political maladies are nourished by the two-party system. No human political system can be without its faults and its weaknesses. But the faults and weaknesses of the two-party system are the reverse side of its virtues; and the virtues are far too precious to discard. All that is needed is that politicians should understand the working of the system and its genius, that they should share the spirit of the English political tradition. Their confidence in their country's political institutions might then be restored: the confidence that they are inherently strong and healthy, and that many difficulties would be overcome if only the hands which manipulate them were not so nerveless. It is possible that the result would be unwelcome to many, that a new governing class would emerge. It is possible that the characters in Kingsley Amis's and John Wain's novels would at long last invade the political world and offend the political Somerset Maughams. But the result would be that the discussion of political issues would again bear some relation to reality. After all, the middle class has had a good run for its money. It should not be beyond it to abdicate now before it renders the country as effete as it has become itself.

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Randolph S. Churchill

The Daily Newspaper

Notes on the Press in Britain and America

SOME of the differences between the New York and London newspapers spring to the eye. The New York papers are much bigger and a little cheaper, but have far smaller circulations. None of the New York papers, with the possible exception of the New York *Times*, which has a special light air edition, attempts to sell on any scale outside a radius of seventy or eighty miles from New York. Distances are much too great and the average American reader, and this includes the New Yorker, is far more interested in news of his own city and state than his opposite number in England is interested in his city or county. This is partly caused by the fact that so much more seems to happen in the way of politics, crime, and sex in American provincial cities than in those in England. London is the great wen which dominates the life of the whole island and furnishes nine-tenths of the domestic news.

With the exception of *The Times*, all the London papers print a large part of their circulation in Manchester. The *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mail* also print in Scotland, the *Express* in Glasgow, and the *Mail* in Edinburgh. This enables a complete national coverage to be effected; and with the unique concentration of population around London, gives the opportunity for very much larger circulations than are possible in the U.S.A. The London *Daily Mirror*, at 4,750,000, has a circulation more than double that of the New York *Daily News's* 2,000,000; and the *Daily Express*, at 4,100,000, has a sale four or five times that of its nearest opposite number, the New York *Journal-American*.

This being the general pattern, it is the more commendable that the New York *Times* (400,000) sells nearly twice as many copies as the London *Times*. Since 90 per cent of the New York *Times's* circulation is necessarily in the New York area, whereas the London *Times* is free to range the British Isles for readers, the contrast is heightened. On the other hand, the relative sales of the second-line quality papers published in the two cities conform closely to the general pattern. The New York *Herald Tribune* only sells 200,000 compared with the *Daily Telegraph's* one million.

* * *

AT FIRST sight any New York newspaper looks as if it would contain more news and comment than all the London daily papers put together. Visitors who arrive in New York for the first time imagine that they will never have time to read the daily paper on its day of issue. Closer inspection, however, reveals that the greater majority of the paper is taken up with page after page of department-store advertising with only an occasional snippet of news sandwiched

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between them. Reference to the table set out later in the article shows that on the day chosen for the comparison New York papers on an average devoted 73% of their space to advertising and 26% to news, while the London papers devoted 33% to advertisements and 65% to news.

It will be noted that the New York *Daily News* and the New York *Post* easily led the field in the proportion of advertising with 82% and 81% respectively. At the other end of the field in England we find the *Daily Sketch* and *Daily Mirror* devoting as little as 23% and 27% to advertising. This must be, at any rate in the *Daily Mirror*'s case, a deliberate policy and cannot arise from any lack of support from the advertisers. At that time the circulation of the London *Daily Mirror* was approaching four million and it is now well on the way to five. These advertisements are not considered by the New York readers as so much wasted space. Many of them get most of their pleasure from reading these paid announcements. This can be seen from the answers given by readers who were questioned by a *Daily News* columnist, Jimmy Jemail, in his feature "The Inquiring Fotographer." Each day, Mr. Jemail pays ten dollars for a "timely interesting question" which has been sent in to him, and he then goes on the street with a camera and a notebook and discovers the answers. In one of the issues printed just after the newspaper strike in December 1953, he set out with the question "How much did you miss your daily newspaper?" Two of the readers he interviewed paid these tributes to the advertising columns:

A Mrs. John C. Samen, Manhattan, said:

> My husband and I buy two newspapers daily. Radio and TV couldn't take their place. For one thing, I missed the advertising, so I've bought very little in the stores. Also without the columns I had very little to gossip about with my husband when he got back home from work.

and a Mr. John G. English Jr., Summit, New Jersey, replied:

> So much so that I must have bought a dozen magazines in the first few days of the strike. And my wife could not run her home properly. Without advertisements to read, she had to buy locally for our family of five.

New York Newspapers	Pages	Price	News Columns	Advertisement Columns	Cartoon Columns	London Newspapers	Pages	Price	News Columns	Advertisement Columns	Cartoon Columns
TIMES	96	5 c.	26%	74%	—	THE TIMES	16	4*d.*	61%	39%	—
HERALD TRIBUNE	56	5 c.	39%	61%	—	DAILY TELEGRAPH	10	2*d.*	63%	37%	—
NEW YORK POST	88	5 c.	19%	81%	—	DAILY MAIL	8	1½*d.*	65%	34%	1%
JOURNAL-AMERICAN	46	5 c.	29%	65%	6%	DAILY EXPRESS	8	1½*d.*	65%	32%	3%
DAILY MIRROR	80	4 c.	23%	75%	2%	NEWS CHRONICLE	10	1½*d.*	65%	34%	1%
DAILY NEWS	108	4 c.	16%	82%	2%	DAILY HERALD	10	1½*d.*	61½%	37½%	1%
						DAILY SKETCH	16	1½*d.*	71⅔%	23%	5⅓%
						DAILY MIRROR	16	1½*d.*	67½%	27%	5½%

The table above shows the size, cost and contents of London and New York papers on a day at random—Thursday, December 10th, 1953.

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LIKE the London *Times*, only more so, the New York *Times* claims to be a paper of record. Its famous mast-head threat, "All the News that's Fit to Print," is almost fulfilled by its ninety-six pages. Although the London *Times* has only a sixth of the space available to the New York *Times*, it nevertheless manages to squeeze in more than a third of the amount of news printed in that paper. The editorial pages (page 9 in the London *Times* and page 46 in the New York *Times* on December 10th) of each newspaper are set out in a very similar fashion. The first four of the New York *Times's* seven columns were occupied with nine leaders. The first three columns of the London *Times's* seven columns were filled by five leaders. The New York *Times* devoted its longest leader to the results of the Bermuda Conference, while the main leader of the London *Times*, which goes to press five hours ahead of the New York *Times*, was devoted to the take-over bid for the Savoy Hotel. The rest of the New York *Times's* leaders were as parochial as the first leader of the London *Times*: there was one on City taxes, another on a New Jersey gas strike, and a third on a proposed airline terminal on First Avenue. The three political leaders in the London *Times* were devoted to the emergency loan to Kenya, the twenty-four-hour strike in Italy, and the Government's plan for increased expenditure on the roads.

* * *

THE first feature many British readers turn to in *The Times* is the correspondence column. Many a popular newspaper would pay handsomely for the long letters which distinguished people contribute free to *The Times*. Often the subjects raised quietly in a ten-line letter in *The Times* will become headline news in other papers the next day. Probably one-third of the letters are concerned with specialised subjects of interest to only a few thousand people. And it is the balance between letters on politics and foreign affairs which later may make history, and the letters on such subjects as rowing in the Navy, the protection of birds, and the proper title for Advent Sunday which gives its correspondence column an importance and fascination which no other newspaper has so far been able to emulate.

The letters in the New York *Times* are intelligent and well informed but they are mainly written by people within sixty miles of New York, whereas the London *Times's* letters come from all over the country and often from overseas. Some of the correspondents to the American paper are well-known names, but on the whole they are about as influential as those who write to the *Yorkshire Post* or the *Birmingham Post*. In the New York *Times* issue of December 10th, 1953, for example, there was a letter which could not have appeared in its London contemporary:

RIGHTS OF NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS

It was indeed most gratifying to read your recent editorial "The Navajos Win a Point."

Defense of the rights of North American Indians is one of the finest of the many "good deeds" for which the *Times* is entitled to credit.

B. S. Bowdish

Sir William Haley would have excluded it, not because he disapproves of Red Indians, but because it would be against his policy to print such a puerile puff for his paper.

One of the leaders in the December 10th issue of the New York *Times* had a bearing on the subject of this article. It was entitled "The Flow of the News" and discussed a recent study of the reporting of foreign affairs by newspapers in the U.S.A. and Western Europe. The *Times's* leader writer noted that "an average reader in the United States spends eighteen and a half minutes a day reading five columns of news, of which only one-eighth is international" and that "the average American newspaper prints a little more than four columns a day of foreign news." He was unable to restrain himself from adding that "the New York *Times* leads the field with thirty-two columns a day." This is an achievement of which the paper may be rightly proud, and in order to have the equivalent coverage both in the

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number of the words and the quality of the writing the British reader would have to subscribe to both *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* and probably as well have to look at the American section of *The Economist.* But once again the London *Times* would have hesitated to nudge its readers into admiration and applause by holding itself up as an example of newspaper rectitude.

* * *

PERHAPS the most important difference in the reports of crimes and trials between the British Press and the American Press is the freedom to comment on every aspect which is accorded to the American reporter. In British papers when a crime has been committed, the law of libel restrains papers from suggesting any solution or naming any person as a principal suspect. During this time, no lawyer or policeman will issue any but the most guarded statement. After the warrant has been issued, the case then becomes *sub judice* and severe penalties can be inflicted for any comment which might appear to prejudice a fair trial of the accused.

In two recent instances, the editor of the *Daily Mirror*, the late Mr. Silvester Bolam, was committed to prison for contempt of court, and the editor of the *Daily Sketch*, Mr. Herbert Gunn, was forced to apologise to the Lord Chief Justice, who said plainly that on any future occasion the arm of the law would be long enough to reach the proprietors also. Neither of these hindrances to a lively circulation campaign are tolerated in the United States. As soon as a murder has been committed the readers of the American tabloids expect to be told who has committed the murder, why he has done so, what his sentence will be, and if possible to read a full signed confession on the front page.

After the arrest of the accused, it is the normal practice for both defence and prosecution counsel to make calculated indiscretions to the press. On occasion, the papers have even been known to canvass jurymen as to their opinions on the probable outcome of the trial.

Such practices were most noticeable during the trial of Alger Hiss, and at that time the phrase "trial by newspaper" became popular to describe them. There was much discussion in the more serious newspapers and political weeklies about the need for a reform in Court procedure to protect the character of the witnesses as well as the accused and to ensure that the jury would come to their decision only on the basis of the evidence presented to them in the Court.

In February 1954, a new occasion arose for discussion of this topic. The District Attorney of Manhattan ordered that no information of any kind should be given to the press about the murder of a once-famous American poet, Maxwell Bodenheim, and his wife, or the confession that had been made by the young man who was alleged to have killed them. This created consternation and indignation among the New York papers. The New York *Daily News* wrote:

> It will becloud, obstruct, and befuddle justice in the borough of Manhattan, which already suffers enough from that sort of thing. It will be the opening wedge for the introduction here of British-type laws covering such matters. . . . The press gag operates to suppress evidence, keep material witnesses from coming forward, and prevent arrests of prime suspects. It keeps reporters from digging up facts of top value in either convicting the guilty or acquitting the innocent — as reporters frequently do in the United States.

The New York *Daily Mirror* was even stronger in its condemnation and described the District Attorney's ruling as: "A kind of legalistic Fascism."

The New York *Herald Tribune* admitted that many of the results of "trial by newspaper" were regrettable:

> This newspaper doubts that the public will be any the healthier or wiser for a daily dose of the details of a nauseous crime as traditionally disclosed by prosecutors, lawyers, and all the machinery of high-geared publicity.

But the *Tribune* concluded:

> One must weigh one evil against the other, whether it is worse to suffer the occasional in-

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fringement of fair trial (which the courts are able to correct) or to proceed even indirectly toward gagging the press and stultifying public information. The balance may be delicate on occasion, but let us avoid any nonsense about interfering with the right to know. It is better that the public should know too much than too little.

* * *

ANOTHER big difference between the presses of the two countries is in the matter of political columnists. These are a potent and pervasive feature of the whole American press. The most noted of them, Mr. Walter Lippmann, the Alsop brothers, Mr. David Lawrence, Mr. Drew Pearson, and several others, are all published in more than a hundred newspapers, some of them in several hundreds. This phenomenon is virtually unknown in the London press. The seven or eight very rich men who control the London papers do not care to have any opinions expressed in their papers except their own. They, perhaps understandably, see no point in paying a lot of good money to people to express their own opinions under their own names. It is cheaper and more gratifying to their own self-esteem to pay people who will, usually anonymously, express the not always very original or sensible opinions of their masters. In the daily press there are two exceptions—Mr. Michael Foot writes a weekly political article in the *Daily Herald*, and Mr. Richard Crossman writes twice a week in the *Daily Mirror*. There are two further exceptions in the Sunday press—Lord Rothermere allows Mr. Alastair Forbes to air his own opinions once a week in the *Sunday Dispatch*, and Mr. Tom Driberg writes a weekly column for *Reynold's News*. And the writer of these notes is currently allowed a wide measure of latitude once a week in Lord Beaverbrook's *Evening Standard*. Of course, sometimes leading public figures are commissioned to write an article or even a series of articles on some particular topic. On these occasions, the Press Lords magnanimously allow them a free hand. However, as a general rule they tend to commission articles from those political figures whose opinions are in the main sympathetic to their own. In this respect the British press generally conforms more closely to the traditions of the late Mr. William Randolph Hearst than to those of the late Mr. Ochs.

* * *

THE New York *Daily News* with a circulation of two million, and the London *Daily Mirror* with a circulation of 4,750,000, are tabloids and both sell more copies than any of their competitors. Each paper makes a particular point of having a lively and vociferous correspondence column. The readers who write in the *Daily News* column "Voice of the People" are dogmatic, pungent, and outspoken. They write to the *Daily News* in order to demonstrate their superiority to the editor and to all other readers. Typical letters on Thursday, December 10th, 1953, were:

DEEP FAT PROGRAM

Queens: Ex-Communists protest Red-baiting. Let's oblige by substituting Red-Frying. Don't let a day go by without doing something to make things sizzling for these rats.

Martin Goldstein

QUEEN AS A CUTIE

Ithaca: Where the hell does that ignoramous recent Voicer get off, calling Queen Frederika of Greece "sexy-looking"? What's he think he's referring to—some uncouth unripe tomato from Brooklyn?

Alexandry Petropolis Koutsedemtrious

The readers of the *Daily Mirror*, though occasionally abusive and denunciatory, are more usually humble and enquiring. They have never heard of anything and they regard the "Old Codgers" who edit "Live Letters" as the source of all information and advice. Typical letters of the *Daily Mirror* with equally typical replies on the same day, December 10th, 1953, were:

KING'S CROSS

"Two Old Codgers" from Acton Street (London) write:

Please tell us exactly where King's Cross is situated, and if there is any history attached to it. Also, how did it get its name?

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It is in the borough of St. Pancras. Used to be known as Battle Bridge, from the bridge that crossed the Fleet river, and the tradition that a battle between the Roman, Paulinus, and Boadicea was fought there. It was renamed King's Cross in 1836 when a monumental cross to George IV and William IV was erected there.

REASON

Mr. Charles Wakeley writes from Upper Pavement, Nottingham:

Origin, please, of the phrase "without rhyme or reason"? I see no reason in it.

Comes from an incident in which Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England, was concerned. A budding author took his first book to him for his opinion. The Chancellor read it, and gave his verdict: "Turn it into rhyme."

This the author did, and once more presented the book for judgement.

"Ay, that will do," said More. "'Tis rhyme now, anyway, whereas before it was neither rhyme nor reason."

* * *

How do British and American papers compare in their treatment of foreign news? A survey by the International Press Institute showed that nine representative British newspapers over a specified period devoted roughly one quarter of all their foreign news to the U.S.A. Some British newspapers, notably the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Sketch*, print very little foreign news, so that while the American proportion may be impressive the absolute amount is often a mere quarter of a column or less. The International Press Institute has measured the space devoted to foreign news over a period and a typical sample shows that of the mass circulation newspapers, the *Daily Telegraph* usually carries the largest amount: where *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* carried eight and seven columns respectively, the *Daily Telegraph* had four and a half, an impressive amount for a 6-page paper with a circulation of around a million. On the same day the *Daily Herald* came next with two columns, the *Daily Express* with one and a half, the *Daily Mail* with one, and the *News Chronicle* with less than one.

Several British newspaper editors were asked to comment on these facts and between them they managed to produce many ingenious reasons why this coverage was not as meagre as it appeared. Many of the editors, under the cloak of anonymity, were most revealing in their views of the purpose of a newspaper. The editor of a London national newspaper seemed to abdicate all responsibility whatever:

I am sure it is true enough that we don't give enough attention to American news, but neither do we give enough attention to home news because of the over-riding space problem.

The editor of a London Sunday paper was even more frank:

The majority of the British population gets its news from the BBC, not the press. No country in the world receives half the coverage given America on the BBC. The Alistair Cooke "letters" and the Harsch-Utley commentaries are the basic source of British news on America. The popular press really only "comments" on the news that is given by the BBC and on American affairs. This comment reflects the dislike of hearing about the power of America, which is one of the strongest British prejudices today.

Another editor of a London national paper hits back neatly with the dictum:

A British newspaperman does not feel that he and his newspaper would have fulfilled their highest function and assured their salvation if they printed, at length, everything that was presented to them as news.

While British editors show themselves slightly ill at ease about the extent and reliability of their foreign news coverage, more than two-thirds of the one hundred and fifty-five American editors questioned believed that their press was doing a good job, only twenty-three thought it fair, and twenty-seven called it a poor job. The foreign correspondents in America of European newspapers were not so satisfied with the way news of their native countries was presented. Their main objection was that the foreign news lacked perspective and balance. They conceded that the reports were usually accurate but shallow, detailed yet not explanatory. The New York

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correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, Mr. Alex Faulkner, complained that in their reports on Britain, a great number of American newspapers merely rely on the presentation of old international clichés. He gives the following examples:

That "Britain is an inefficient, old-world, rundown country, at the end of her tether, a 20th century anachronism with no part to play in the world of atom bombs and jet planes."

That "Britain, with its devilishly cunning Foreign Office and its disgustingly efficient intelligence service, [is] an international bully."

That Britain is "a chronic panhandler, always trying to touch Uncle Sam for an extra dollar."

That the Englishman is "a comic character, effete, P. G. Wodehouse to the core, with a funny accent and fantastic ideas about heating and eating."

* * *

To sum up these necessarily sketchy notes: it has been said that every country gets the Government it deserves. It probably also gets the press it deserves. My overall impression is that the best British newspapers are fully the equal of the best American newspapers and that the worst English papers like the *Daily Mirror* would be as bad as the worst American papers like the New York *Daily News* if it were not for the stricter British laws of libel. Editors of undesirable papers are apt to excuse their conduct by saying that a newspaper merely holds up a mirror to life and that what the reader see is just his own reflection. There is something in this; but it is not the whole truth. Some papers have definitely built up mammoth circulations by consciously degrading the public taste. They set their sights on the gutter and invite the public to go down and roll about with them in it and join them in the task of intruding into other people's private lives and spattering anyone who has achieved any degree of eminence or notoriety with filth and slime. It would be nice to think that there is a particular corner of hell reserved for these men, particularly when they are very rich, and are prepared to get richer by corrupting their fellow human beings—men, women and children alike.

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Shade Those Laurels

A Diversion by Cyril Connolly

AS IF divining my disappointment: "Read that last sentence again, Kemble," he interrupted. "*And more, perhaps, than any man living,*" I continued, "*Sir Mortimer appreciates and has taught others to appreciate the things which we can touch or see—this visible world.*" "Yes, it's good," went on my Editor—"so much better than the one we're using. A thousand pities you're not a celebrity: it's names we like on this paper, especially when a famous author, whom most of our readers have never heard of—ha!—gets a knighthood on his birthday. Tell you what: I'll change a letter here and there and we can turn it into something. '*More perhaps than any man now living, Sir Mortimer appreciated the things which he could touch or see!*' I never like to scrap a good bloke or a good sentence. Take care of this and we'll run you off a proof when you come back—meanwhile don't let him grab it. He mightn't think it funny." "But really, I can't let you do this—why I'm——" "It'll pay for your journey. Fair enough?"

And so that very evening I found myself going down to stay with our newest knight, Sir Mortimer Gussage, K.B.E., with a draft of his own obituary in my breast-pocket.

TALLBOYS was a place I had long been determined to visit: the house has given its name to the *de luxe* edition of his collected works where it is figured on the title page beyond its lime avenue in an almost impertinent perfection. I was under no illusion about the purpose of my invitation, nor for a moment did I suppose that Sir Mortimer would have asked me if I had not been able to mention at a party that I was doing a piece on him for his birthday. By lifting a finger Sir Mortimer could have met anyone in the kingdom. As an unimportant novel reviewer, my privilege had to be earned. And so it happened that, four days later, I found myself sliding into Salisbury station, descending with the misty October twilight, to be met among the churns on the long, cold platform by the great man's most finished masterpiece.

Laurian Gussage stepped forward and shook my hand. "You *are* Stephen Kemble? You *must* be! Daddy will be so pleased you have come." Her voice was low and crisp,

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This is the first section, quite complete in itself, of a novel in progress. We had hoped to publish the entire novel in instalments, but for various reasons that has turned out not to be feasible. Of the events here related, Mr. Connolly writes: All the characters are imaginary. The "I" is not "me"—yet.

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her great eyes wide apart—a brownish green —her face rather round, above the grey Paris scarf, were it not for a high forehead from which the dark hair was swept back. She wore broad-waled blue corduroy trousers under a three-quarter length camel coat and tried to seize my bag. We made our way through groups of clanking soldiers to a small closed Sunbeam Talbot and soon were driving over the river, past the Cathedral and out along the Blandford road.

"I wonder what you'll make of Tallboys. Isn't it your first visit?" "Who's going to be there?" I countered. "Oh, it's just a family party for Daddy's birthday tomorrow. There's Daddy and Cressida, that's my step-mother — and Jane Sotheran — 'Sacharissa,' you know." "Gracious!" "Don't let them both tear you to pieces." "Are they so carnivorous?" "Oh no! Not destructive. They just like young men. And then there's 'Ginger' Bartlett—he's Daddy's publisher—and Hugh Curry Rivel, his oldest friend; he's a writer too. And Julian Frere, who's a young Cambridge disciple and supposed to be terribly clever, and that's the lot, except for Norman and Mona." "Who are they?" "Norman and Mona Farran; they have the mill nearby but they're always over at the house. Norman's another very old friend of Daddy's and Mona does his letters and typing." "Are they writers too?" "Good heavens, no; Norman has a fruit farm." "And you?" "I'm trying to be a painter; I feel I've had enough of the written word and *'la vie littéraire.'* " "You think it's a bad life? I'm a would-be novelist, don't forget." She looked at me reflectively. "I don't think it's life at all."

We had been twisting in the dark along roads which had narrowed stealthily to lanes until at last we crossed a little bridge and shot up a leafy drive while the headlights illuminated a square brick house with a shell-shaped wooden porch. As we drew up with a crunch of gravel and bruising of rosemary, the front door swung open on to a bright pine-panelled hall. While a foreign-looking manservant in a wrinkled white jacket with a button missing was taking my bag and coat away, Laurian pushed me into a large living-room, where the whole alarming party stood assembled round an open log fire. "I've brought you the new admirer, Daddy," and for the second time in my life I found myself shaking hands with the man whose work had changed it. A "humanist" is perhaps a discredited word, let us say rather—an illuminator, a life-enhancer, a priest-king or a poet in the original sense of "maker"; one who has tried to distil from his imagination an imperishable elixir for the unborn, the discriminating, and the lost. With his pointed bronze beard, his noble brow and piratical blue eyes, his vigorous nose and full rich mouth, by his whole buoyant air of ironical expectation, he suggested the High Renaissance, the man of action who was yet dedicated to poetry and learning, like Sir Fulke Greville of whom he had so understandingly written, Kenelm Digby, or Killigrew, made the subject of his only play. He gave me a warm hand-clasp and a smile of appreciation. "Good of you to come," he boomed. "I don't think you've met my wife." "Mr. Kemble, your servant, sir." Cressida made me a little curtsey, her two brown arms gripping the pleats of her quilted skirt in a ballet dancer's gesture, and then she lifted her small nineteen-twentyish face up to mine. "Of course, I know all about you." Her voice was a tiny silver bell and every syllable blown out of her mouth like a smoke-ring. She took my arm just above the elbow in a light yet somehow clinging and over-intimate grip, and led me up to the haughty Sacharissa. "How do you do!" Miss Sotheran's voice was deep and resonant and her greeting went down the scale like a dropped guitar. She, too, smiled and there was something I didn't quite like about that either, for she put out a hand from which all life had been withdrawn so that I appeared to be holding it up with a fearful familiarity. "And now our merry gentlemen, God rest them," enunciated Cressida. "Mr. Bartlett, our publisher, let nothing him dismay." I greeted an erect and shambling figure in a blue city suit with a large open porous face and flabby paw. "And Mr. Curry Rivel." A self-consciously

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"interesting" head with a swelling Egyptian back to it, posed on the neck like an early photo of Rupert Brooke but shrivelled by the secret processes of middle age; dry lips, pale unfriendly eyes, sandy hair brushed back and whitening at the sides like wind-blown wheat, and a flying hand I seemed hardly to touch, while a high-pitched voice disposed of me by rising on the last syllable. "How do you DO!" "Oh yes, Mr. Kemble, and I was nearly forgetting, here's someone of your own age to play with. This is Mr. Frere — Julian, behold another acolyte to swing the censer with you for the Knight of the Split Caesura." A man in his early thirties, and so actually considerably older than me as was obvious to both of us, put down his evening paper. He was tall and almost good-looking; his face dark and intelligent but somehow slightly battered, like an "export reject" of a rather good design. He reminded me of a less suave and rather more *louche* counterpart of Senator McCarthy. "How do you do, Mr. Kemble. Of course I read your novel reviews." "Yes?" There was charm in his careless tone. "Or do my level best to: for like all young critics you seem to have forgotten Dr. Johnson—'a horse that can count up to ten is a remarkable horse, not a remarkable mathematician.'" He stuck out a long, grimy, close-bitten finger and pushed my cambric handkerchief further down the breast-pocket.

"I'LL thank you not——" I began, but Sir Mortimer clapped his hands, standing erect with one leg slightly advanced like a bronze Æginetan warrior. "Cocktails at last." As they were being passed round by the dishevelled servant (I nearly said "house-boy"), the Norman Farrans arrived, and amid general greetings I was introduced to them. The one man present who was so original as not to write had a quiet face with fine, sad eyes and a mild, doggy look that went well with his old tweeds, while his wife, Mona Farran, was distinctly shabby; she wore coral earrings and there were lumps of grey in her short black hair; her green skirt was too high to my way of thinking and revealed woollen stockings twisted round the knee. Sir Mortimer offered me a martini. "And how was London? Deliciously noisy, I expect, with Charles Morgan away. You'll find us abominably quiet here, I'm afraid. The recreation of North Wiltshire is the bottle, of South Wiltshire, dressing up. Here on the borderline between them, we seldom dress—not even *lederhosen*—and we don't drink—or at any rate not nearly as much as we should like to. And now, let us go in—Cressida!" He barked her name out in quite a different tone, like a command, and she made a little face at Mr. Curry Rivel as we began to shuffle towards the door, like sand in an hour-glass, all seeming to hold back yet one by one contriving to pass through.

The dining-room was large, high, and like the hall panelled in some pale wood; it looked unexpectedly formal for such an easy-going house—or was it so easy-going? For I noticed that the men were all in dark suits; even Norman Farran's tweed was a peaty black-brown Donegal, while the women, except for his wife, were in low dresses. Laurian too had changed into something white and was beside me again, glowing like a camellia. A glittering crystal chandelier was suspended above the oval Sheraton table where two branching cut-glass candlesticks sent out their wavering sprays. In the centre was a plain rose bowl from which a diminuendo of goblets radiated star-wise in the direction of each guest; we all had an old print with a glass top as a table-mat and even a written place-card. I dared to hope the heavy capitals were Laurian's, for I found myself put between her and Sir Mortimer. "Most of us have to share a lady tonight," he said, "so I have given you the best of the bunch and penalised you with myself as your neighbour." His voice had a curious resonance; an irresistible voice in which something profoundly masculine seemed to struggle with an imperishable gaiety and charm; whatever he was saying, his tone made of it a treat, an enlightenment, a special occasion, while his laugh—a single deep, infectious "Ha"—was like the lifting of the

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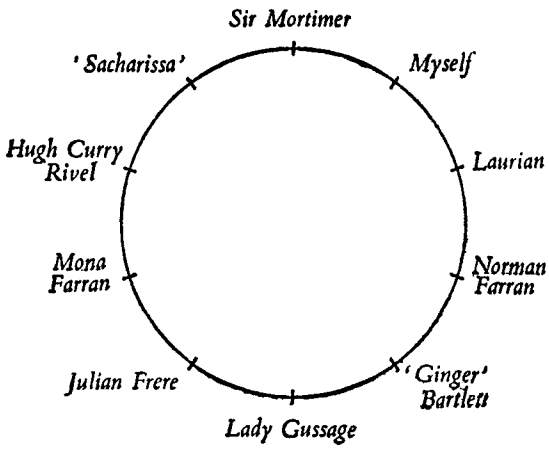
cover from a silver entrée dish on a cold morning. I did not know how to reply and mumbled my embarrassment while I looked carefully around me. The table was like this:



I am interested in table arrangement, it belongs to a mummified world which I am too young to remember. I decided that these people must all be where they were for a particular reason. 'Sacharissa' was famous enough to be on Sir Peregrine's right—and Cressida? She had given herself an important dud in 'Ginger' Bartlett and a consolation prize—clever Mr. Julian Frere. The two dim Farrans would presumably be fitted in last and so the one who seemed badly placed was Mr. Curry Rivel. Unless he was keen on 'Sacharissa'? He did not look it. They were both middle-aged—she in the florid purple phases of the malady, he in the grip of alopecia, his main crop of hair receding at the temples, while eyebrows, ears, and nostrils sent out a few last despairing shoots. I have always found it pay to regard any collection of people as enemies until they have been proved friendly, but I have learnt to conceal my suspicion. Say little; cast a cold eye; let them speak first and appear to take them at their own valuation—smile like a selective weed-killer—and in a few minutes most of the people one meets for the first time will have irretrievably betrayed themselves. First impressions are best because they arise before we have allowed people to impose on us. Sacharissa — a mauve blancmange, I noted; Cressida—a marmoset with a chic suggestion of Saint Anthony's pig. Curry Rivel—a dried joss-stick; Bartlett—a randy major in the Pioneer Corps; Frere—a Third Programme barrow-boy; Laurian and Sir Mortimer — my only allies. Good — we were three against five—seven if one threw in the colourless Farrans. I thought of my favourite gangster, "Baby-Face" Floyd, snapped a smile on my face as one cocks a revolver, and waited the attack.

"I'm sure you don't know what is the hardest thing in the world to do," exclaimed Sir Mortimer, "especially if one is that despised thing, a perfectionist." "To write a flawless page," I hazarded. "To keep one's figure," boomed Sacharissa. "To ripen, by natural means and in the open, a Doyenné de Comice pear." Hugh Curry Rivel's reedy civil servant's voice was precise, well-bred, Peacockian. "Taking your dictation, Sir Mortimer," rogued Mona Farran. Laurian made no contribution and when I caught her eye she only giggled. "A flawless page," went on Sir Mortimer, "I said the hardest thing in the world to do—I did not propose the impossible." "Oh, what about *David and the Sibyl*, you old hypocrite?—a modest Merlin at his Table Round!" "No, Sacharissa, I can tell you it's nothing to do with our art, though the Round Table comes into it. No, nothing so literary as that. It's just to give the perfect dinner—one in which everything comes off; the food, the wine, the china, the glass, the silver, the service, the guests—good talk, good fare, good people, good digestions. 'Dinner's everything,' as Hofmann wrote, 'C'est le but des actions humaines.' They say food is a substitute for love. Well, it's certainly a bloody good one. Every night I think —well, perhaps this time tomorrow we shall have done it — and every time some little thing goes wrong." "And tomorrow's your birthday!" "Yes, this is the dress rehearsal for that supreme occasion, and who knows—it may turn out to have surpassed the feast!" "Well, let's see first what we have in our nose-bag." Hugh Curry Rivel stretched out for the menu beside him in its white jade

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holder and handed it to Sacharissa, who intoned reverently:

CLEAR TURTLE SOUP
SOLE COLBERT
ROAST PARTRIDGE
HARICOTS VERTS GAME CHIPS
CHEESE SOUFFLÉ
COX'S ORANGE PITMASTON PINEAPPLE IRISH PEACH
DOYENNÉ DE COMICE KENTISH COBS

"WELL, Fate has accepted your challenge, Hugh, the elusive pear is there!" "Not Fate," cried Mona, "but my husband. We haven't a fruit farm for nothing—and you're right, they are difficult things to ripen. If Sir Mortimer didn't happen to be so fond of them, we'd never bother." "I expect you find it a very dull menu," insisted my host, "but it has three advantages; it's easy to procure, it's foolproof to cook, and—this is a big and—it's the kind of unassuming sauce-free food that goes well with our wines. And in this house wine takes precedence. Let's see what we're drinking: with the turtle, an old Solera that was of age when Rimbaud and Verlaine played boy in Howland Street—a Montrachet, discreet as Docteur Blanche, to keep a flinty eye on the fish—a Romanée Saint Vivant as old as *Prufrock* that should hold your attention, Mr. Kemble,—and when the birds are stomached and while the cheese soufflé exhales its brief 'Coronemus,' the last—or almost the last—of my Yquem '21. *Reverentia*! And with the dessert we shall listen to the deplorable confessions of a magnum of dear Hugh Walpole's pink champagne."

"And you say this is only the dress rehearsal," I glamoured. "And so therefore a most important occasion, a *répétition générale*. For tomorrow night I may still keep a few surprises. You will notice, for instance, that both hock and claret are absent from this evening's menu—and so are lobster and pheasant and foie gras and muscats and nectarines. . . . If I weren't a writer, Mr. Kemble, I'd express myself through my collections, and if I didn't collect, I'd say it with claret, and if I couldn't get any claret, I'd long ago have toddled off to a better world. I thought also of perhaps trying to reproduce a typical menu from the Goncourt journals; you remember that turbot with the marvellous cream sauce which Flaubert served to them at Croisset the Easter before his apoplexy." "Apoplexy!" whistled Curry Rivel. "I always understood it was a syphilitic seizure, not unconnected with his stomatitis." "Surely we can leave it at epilepsy, a visitation of *le grand mal*, as the indiscreet Du Camp maintained," cried Sacharissa. "Epilepsy—who falls for that? What about the purple mark Maupassant saw round his neck?" "Proof positive," snapped Frere, "as Lenormant implies, that he had hanged himself in his bath. The niece and nephew had only just time to get the huge body into the bedroom. The whole thing was hushed up." "I have a letter from Dumesnil," replied Sir Mortimer, "who spoke to the doctor who found him. He said it was undoubtedly what we should call a stroke." "But since then Jean Pommier has discovered the letter to his brother in which he enquired about treatment for syphilis." "Rustchuk Hanem? De la littérature!" "Syphilis"—"Epilepsy"—"Suicide"—"Overeating!"—"Gentlemen—*mes enfants*—Sacharissa, desist I beg you—this is meant to be Morty's perfect dinner and you're turning it into a 'Crowner's Quest.'" "Cressida—your pardon." "Naughty boy—and you're fifty-five tomorrow." "Flaubert, Baudelaire, Baudelaire's brother, Maupassant, Maupassant's brother, Daudet—the badge of genius—they all had it." Rivel was still muttering.

I turned to the soup, aromatic with basil and calipee, which we had all allowed to get cold, and to the formidable Solera standing beside it. We were waited on by a trim parlourmaid and by the same manservant in his shrunken white jacket. And now it was delightful to concentrate on the little leathery soles involved in their lumps of parsley butter and on the gunmetal white Burgundy which went round with them. It was only then I had time to notice how unusual were all the accessories: spoons and forks were thinner in the waist than any I had seen and were marked on the stem with deep lions and

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whiskered leopards; everything glittered and tapered extravagantly; all around were china shells and pink and green baskets of china strawberries or bundles of asparagus and brown ducks whose backs were lids, and there was even a crackled china melon. The candlelight broke violet from the hanging lustres and was reflected in the glass chains which were looped across the double table candlesticks; our glasses were warm yet fragile, with thin stems and a pliant waxen transparency, in the centre the silver bowl was by contrast extremely severe and held some huge pink flowers that I had never seen before. Behind us on the sideboard were the fruit dishes; some of glass like moon-stained ice and others a part of some lustred shell service whose dishes were piled with apples and cobnuts, while in a kind of nautilus were three or four enormous pears. "Where's the Pitmaston pineapple?" I said to Laurian. "Oh, it's not a real pineapple. It's the name of an apple, a little honey-musk russet—so is the Irish peach—we're great apple connoisseurs here." The visible world, I thought, with a vengeance! She laughed. "Yes, we're connoisseurs of everything—'nutty, compact and fertile,' that's me. 'Aromatic, blushes pink, and a good cropper'—all things bright and beautiful, as long as no one else has got them—all creatures great and small, provided they're edible." "I think you're perfectly right." "Oh yes, so many do—not a shrimp is peeled without a dissertation, not a sparrow falls to the ground without a post-mortem, not a gooseberry is taken without a permit." "But in a way that's as it should be. To a great artist everything in life must be of equal importance—doesn't your father say somewhere that just as a straight line is really a number of infinitesimal points which we can't see, so a good life is a number of infinitesimal moments, but all equal in value, and each implying an act of choice. 'The theory of perpetual discrimination' he has called it. It's only the weak who think one moment or one point is more important than another." Hugh Curry Rivel, I noticed, was listening intently. Sir Mortimer was still talking Goncourt to Sacharissa: "Then you would have been my George Sand," he was telling her. Laurian grew more thoughtful. "But it's not exactly like that—for one thing some points on the line *must* be more important than others—the first and probably the last — and so it is with a human life —the two moments which start something and which end something are called birth and death, and all the connoisseurship and discrimination and 'hard gem-like flame-throwing' that goes on here seems to hush up and imprison a more real kind of living. We don't mention birth because it's so far behind or death because it's too close—and all this 'expertise' seems to me a diversion to retard the passage of time. I expect Canute became a terrific connoisseur of waves as he called on them one after another. Anyhow, it makes me glad not to live by a possession-clock, to have only a few sticks in my studio, a plastic teacup and an ironstone jug and basin." "Mademoiselle se croit trop artiste pour aimer les belles choses?" It was said with venomous distinctness. I glared across at Hugh Curry Rivel, who had sent over this unexpected volley, but couldn't concoct an answer. He held up his glass of burgundy to his nose, took a sip, rotated the glass with the base gripped between thumb and forefinger, and then swallowed a large mouthful. The wine was clear and bright as the red juice which oozed from my tender partridge's well-pronged flank. I took a swig myself and pressed my leg close to Laurian's to demonstrate my sympathy. I felt her long, hard thigh respond to mine, the knee-joints touching, and then my calf brushed against hers, as if our legs had suddenly been locked into position — even our ankles met. I was strangely disturbed and frightened.

We now appeared to have exhausted our amiability at this end of the table and so we turned to listen to the others like a jazz band making way for the rumba orchestra. "Well, Cressida, it's all fixed," said Sir Mortimer, "my birthday treat tomorrow is to include both drinking and dressing up. A soirée chez Magny—a dinner from the Goncourt journal! Sacharissa insists that I myself impersonate Flaubert but I refuse unless

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she plays the maternal rôle of George Sand. Hugh, here, will be our liverish Edmond de Goncourt, and Julian, my disciple, the young Maupassant — 'Guy le chauve' — our 'green man' Norman can be Alphonse Daudet (even he will have heard of 'Tartarin'), and our new guest, Mr. Kemble here, shall be young Zola. Cressida, you will have to play 'La Muse,' Louise Colet, and you Ginger, our faithful publisher, Charpentier. Laurian and Mona can be the two ladies of my household." "In fact your niece and mother." "Thank you, Hugh." "I'd rather be La Présidente than that odious Louise Colet," cried Cressida, "she had more chaps for one thing." Lady Gussage gave a low laugh: I would almost have said a coarse chuckle, quite different from her usual silvery detonation. "Well, we shall all have to drink a toast to 'notre grand Flau,'" said Curry Rivel, "in Goncourt's favourite 'cramant nature'. I wonder, by the way, what the Hermit of Croisset would have thought of your knighthood. 'Les honneurs déshonorent, les titres dégradent,' wasn't it?" "He must have been a bit of a bourgeois," interrupted Julian, "or you couldn't call him 'notre grand Flau,' or even 'the Hermit of Croisset.' Imagine calling Baudelaire 'notre cher Bau——'" "Or Maupassant 'notre brave Mau,'" said Hugh, or Daudet 'Dau' or Zola 'Zo'——'" "Ma basta," piped Cressida, "let's enjoy tonight for once without Le Petit Larousse. And can't we have the dinner in a period when women were invited for their looks?" "What about a Roman dinner?" said Julian. "The women only came in afterwards." "All Roman dinners end up at Trimalchios," replied Sir Mortimer, "and I don't want to retire constantly to the Vomitorium or to have my coffin brought on by Angelo here (he waved to the servant) or to eat a quantity of stuffed livestock with liberated pigeons flying about the room, each with an hors d'œuvre inside him like Japanese boxes. I always thought that meal lasted much too long." "I know I should hate Roman cooking," said Sacharissa. "That horrible garum — what did Carême call it? 'Foncierément lourde et sans finesse.'" "Why not try one of their more specialised menus?" the sneering tone of Mr. Julian Frere took up. "Like the dinner 'en deuil' Domitian gave his senators. You remember, Mortimer? The floor, the walls, and the ceiling of the room were black, so were the chairs, and the guests were introduced one by one during the night. Each found that a little column had been put in front of him, like those they set on tombs, on which his name was engraved, with a lamp like those they hung in sepulchres; then naked young slaves with blackened bodies stole like ghosts into the hall and danced ceremoniously round the guests before placing themselves at their feet; then they brought on the dingy little titbits which were offered to the dead, served on black plate. The senators were all expecting to have their throats cut and maintained complete silence while Domitian meandered on about the latest murders and assassinations, until he sent them rumbling home with unfamiliar escorts, frozen with fear in their closed litters." "I seem to remember he went on dispatching callers to them all through the small hours," said Curry Rivel, "who brought with a loud knocking first their silver columns, then their black plate, and then the slave who had waited on them, now washed and whitened, while each imperial present petrified them with further terror." "Certainly." "Well, I invite you all to dinner tomorrow, but I'm no Domitian," said Sir Mortimer. "'Ego nolo Cæsar esse.' But what a writer old Suetonius was—that arid grammarian's style which always just avoids melodrama or bathos." "Dion Cassius," muttered Frere. "And what kind of Roman dinner could I tempt you with, Norman—a fruitarian orgy?" The local green finger turned his sad spaniel eyes on his wife's employer. "Not just fruit—perhaps a few mushrooms—like Claudius." "One mushroom wasn't it?" said Curry Rivel. "One very big mushroom," answered Julian, "'delectabile boletum.'" "What, you've read Suetonius too, Norman, in between chemical sprays!" laughed Sir Mortimer. "In the Loeb was it—or Bohn or Kelly?" "Not Suetonius — only Robert Graves, in a Penguin." He spoke quietly, as

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if unaware that he was being made a butt. "I don't believe we girls will have any more fun with these Roman celebrations than in your stuffy old Goncourt," tinkled Cressida. "Can't we just have a delicious unassuming modern birthday party with some slap and tickle and leave it at that? Sacharissa?" "D'accord!" "Laurian?" "Double d'acc." "Mona?" "Most certainly!" "Unless clever pretty Mr. Kemble has any original notions?" "Who? Me? Oh no, at least I don't think so." "Well, let's leave the decision to our strong, silent publisher. Ginger, what do you say?" It was indeed the first time I had heard the sombre fellow open his mouth. "The only dinner I ever attended which came completely up to scratch," he said thickly, his false teeth clicking briskly over the labials, "was one evening at the old Algonquin." He began a rambling apologetic disquisition in which, like a smothered fog-signal, one caught the names of departed dollar-earners, literary wags, and pickled punsters—all the glossy affluent nobodies who had flourished while Sir Mortimer had slaved in obscurity at his *David and the Sybil* or pondered those small works of art wherein the formal pellucid brilliance of the twenties was irradiated by an underlying unrest and dawning anxiety like the prelude to the *Rheingold*. I remembered the prophetic ending of his strange poem "Time to go in":

"*All the prawns in the sea choking in a glass jar,*
And summer strangled in a ruin of elms."

By contrast, the celebrities of Mr. Bartlett's story seemed only to exist, like the publisher himself, when seeing off the Fitzgeralds at Grand Central or playing poker with the Bromfields a day out from Nantucket. "Another remarkable occasion at the Savoy Grill, our English Algonquin," he went on, "where I saw the disastrous results of Rebecca's clam-chowder wager—gastronomically disastrous I mean, for as Heywood Broun cracked back to Bennett: 'It's not your liver, Arnold, I'm worried about, it's your circulation'—Ha! Ha!" "La table élégante est le dernier rayon de soleil qui caresse les vieillards," whispered Sacharissa. "Grimod?" said Curry Rivel. "No, le Marquis de Cussy whom Baudelaire admired—or was that Custine?" "I don't know—it's like Marmontel and Carmentelle." "Pugin or Puget." They were off. "Sénac de Meilhan and Maine de Biran." "Orrery and Ossory." "Condillac and Condorcet." "Mahaffey and Cavaffy."

LAURIAN turned suddenly to me. "You told me you knew Sacharissa's books as well as Hugh's—were you being funny?" "Not intentionally." "I mean—have you ever read any?" "Why, yes." "And what do you think of them?" "Curry Rivel seems to me precious, pedantic, sterile; Sacharissa sensible, flowing, earthy, dramatic, but somehow boring and vulgar. He's like the little-finger nail rasping on a guitar, she's the flat palm twanging the bass—your father is—well—Segovia." "You mean he combines them?" "I mean that a book like *David and the Sybil* (I know one should not go on as if it were the only one he has written), somehow unites the astringent erudition of Curry Rivel with the warmth and power of Sacharissa, and there's something else too, a kind of macabre insolence, like Julian Frere's conversation, only much more exquisite and graceful." "Yes, I understand—and thank you. It's all there and even a touch of Norman's green finger. Autumnal sugar, country common sense."

"I suppose that's what we mean by genius, all the various little talents of an age amalgamating into something greater, a composite whole, a unique aroma." "I heard the words 'unique aroma' from my young neighbour. Very appositely, for here we have precisely that." And Sir Mortimer shattered my word-picture as he filled the deepest and narrowest of the goblets with an amber ichor whose bouquet (how am I doing?) exhaled the sunshine of Southern Septembers strained through the faun's blown grape-skin. Sir Mortimer raised his hand and blandly surveyed his guests. "Well—here it is. 1921. A good year, and a great summer; the first time one could go abroad after the last war but

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one, the beginning of the twenties: experiment, freedom, extravagance, hope. 'Teste David cum Sybilla,' as I was quoting then, and before 'solvet sæclum cum favilla' had become the writing on the wall. "See fulfilled the prophet's warning / Heaven and earth in ashes burning." And now of all that excess and promise, of all that liberty and laughter, of Capri and the Kurfürstendamm, Toulon and Montparnasse, Aldous's *Crome Yellow*; Firbank at the Tour Eiffel; Lytton's *Queen Victoria*; Valéry and Proust—we have only the gold from this bottle—and Tom Eliot of course—to still our gathering fear and the doubts which haunt us. Never mind! There are some young people here whose vintage is not yet gathered; may theirs be the outstanding one! Hugh! Norman! Mona! Sacharissa! Ginger! Let us drink to those whose festival, as Leopardi said, is still before them. To my Cressida, who has yet to find her Troilus, to Laurian, to Julian who hasn't yet apostasised on his old friend, and to young Mr. Kemble here with his keen eye and virginal palate. Remember, young man, all I can I tell you about life: beneath the comedy burns the tragedy; beneath the tragedy lies the ecstasy. The gaiety is in the gravity. You have only to dig." "With a Hey, Nonny, Nonny," whispered the ill-mannered Curry Rivel. They raised their glasses and drank with pompous cordiality like the Guardians in *The Cocktail Party*. Five of them now to four of us, for Sacharissa, evidently sore about her age group, didn't seem anxious to collaborate. Norman Farran grew suddenly vocal, "Reply, reply." "Yes, Julian, you answer," from Hugh. "Cressida, Cressida," from Ginger Bartlett. "Laurian," from Norman. "Mr. Kemble," chirped Mona, fiddling with a grey kiss-curl that had got into her glass. The four young people nervously attacked the wobbling slabs of brown cheese soufflé which Angelo had set in front of them. There were purple wine-stains on his white sleeve—evidently another humanist. "Reply, reply," chorused our elders. "Give us a toast—a rule of life—a gnomic maxim," Sir Mortimer chided. "My mind is a complete blank," fluted Cressida. "Oh, Sacharissa, why aren't you with us." "When in doubt I try out all the last words of Roman Emperors," said Hugh. "One always fits." "Don't give them so much help, they're spoiled already," interrupted Sir Mortimer. "Mine are Claudius' then," from Julian Frere, " 'Ut puto, concacavi me,' which I might translate: 'Goodness gracious, I've bogged in my bags.' " "A toast, a toast." Laurian lifted a golden glass in her pale, firm hand. "Down the hatch!" I was tongue-tied and Julian seemed to have said my say. The Roman emperors had deserted me. Cressida stood up with all the artificial poise she invariably commanded. "Camera! Lights! Silence! I happen to think this is a serious moment; for the first time I drink as the wife of a knight as well as of a genius. As some of you may know, most of my youth has been passed in small repertory theatres, and to us a knight—except he of the Burning Pestle, which never came my way—was either Elizabethan—like Falstaff or Aguecheek—or Restoration, where I'm more at home. A sorry, shambling, sexy crew—Sir Lucius Bedwell, Sir Timothy Dildo, Sir Peregrine Pego—you all know the form. Even—dare I whisper it?—Lady Gussage sounds like a comic rôle to me, very different from fair Cressid. So I'm not sure if I'm as utterly thrilled by my elevation as I should like to be, though I'm woman enough to prefer it to being the wife of a C.H., an O.M., a P.C., and all those empty initials. So I'm not going to drink to the knighthood—and I'm not going to drink to the birthday, because that's for tomorrow night, and I'm not going to drink to Morty the Man—'ancient person of my heart'—because I've other ways of showing what I think of him." "With a Hey, Nonny, Nonny!" "Sh—silence." "So I drink to his books, to all his books, The Tallboys edition, and of course as well to Hugh and *his* books and Sacharissa and *hers* and to dear old 'Gingah' who publishes us all and so never can afford the newest Bentley, and to Mona who types him and Norman who supplies him with Vitamin C, but above all I drink to his new book, the work in progress—may we soon be allowed to read it, and

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when it comes out of the wind tunnel, may it belong specially to Julian and Laurian and Mr. Kemble and me as *David and the Sybil* and the rest belonged to Ginger, Sacharissa, Mona, and Hugh. Compañeros! 'The new book!' " We all applauded and thumped and raised our glasses, now bubbling with Sir Hugh's old and faintly corky champagne. I gazed round the table. Sir Morty had never appeared so handsome, his face was full of colour, he resembled a dapper Pelasgic deity, a spruce, bearded Zeus, or the smiling, satisfied husband on an Etruscan tomb. Julian was looking a bit green. There were beads of sweat on his forehead, now covered by a limp black lock. Mona was giggling. Bartlett seemed rather blank, like a man who's walked into the wrong club, while Hugh was frowning over his glass. I looked at Laurian who winked her Botticelli eye at Sacharissa, who was gazing at Norman, even as Norman seemed to be far away, staring over my shoulder. I turned round and saw behind me on the wall a portrait of Laurian by Duncan Grant or Henry Lamb or some such period piece. I looked again, it was of a woman a few years older. I guessed at once. Her mother. It was a less happy, more sophisticated face, with the hair worn low upon the brow as in the twenties, the eyes lustrous and enigmatic, the lips slightly parted; a loose brown jumper and a huge pearl necklace merging with a brown county landscape; there were no pearls round Laurian's throbbing white neck—only moonstones. "The book, the book," I shouted. "Title please," said Cressida. "Can't you give us the gen, sir," simpered Julian with mock humility. "Pour it on, pour it on," cried Laurian, and Hugh murmured stupidly, "With a Hey, Nonny, Nonny!" "I can't tell you much at this stage," went on Sir Mortimer, "but it's very good of all of you to take such an interest. I'm trying to do something rather complicated. An autobiography that's not written quite as one—more in the nature of La Bruyère's Characters—a few pages about all the people, all the situations, all the types, all the tangibles that have always so fascinated me throughout my life; the agents and reagents of my electuary. A home-made tarot pack as it were, of my influences; perhaps you could call it a bread-and-butter letter to the twentieth century. I've got only a working title so far, from one of the Roman Emperors again—'Eyes, look your last'—and I hope soon to find a better. I'm really trying to pass in review all the people and things to whom one day I shall most dread saying goodbye and to put them into focus, making each the subject of a prose poem—an Enigma Variation—round their attributes, like the Epistles of Horace set to the music of Pelléas and Mélisande; ancient gourmets like Ausonius and Archestratus; favourite philosophers like Democritus, Pythagoras, Aristippus, Lucretius, Berkeley, and Hume (le bon David); playwrights like Congreve, dandies like Selwyn; beaux like Brummell; centenarians like Fontenelle and Xenophilus and Chevreuil; or people who lived at the right time like Rogers, Peacock, Luttrell, and Lorenzo da Ponte or the photographer Nadar; painters like Altdorfer and Mabuse and Bosch and Patinir, Watteau, Fragonard, Liotard, and La Tour; elegiac poets of all time from Theognis and Mimnermus, Tibullus, and Propertius to Baudelaire and Toulet; story-tellers from Apuleius to Villiers de L'Isle-Adam; travellers from Herodotus to Beckford; letter-writers from Cicero to Barbey D'Aurévilly, novelists from Petronius to Svevo; essayists from Horace and Montaigne to Landor and Hazlitt; and my favourite talkers and the beautiful women I have loved in literature, and their animals, Madame de Pompadour's 'Fidelité,' Madame du Deffand's 'Tonton,' Leonardo's lady with a ferret (which is really a pine-marten); and the places, the plants, the fruit, the china and furniture, the things one can never have enough of, like Carione and Scarlatti, the stray faces, the girl on the links at Carmel and the one on the Blue train—everything, all my rich thievery 'bundled up into a loose adieu.' I've always felt that no one—not even Montaigne or Boswell or Gide—has carried egotism to the complete and final expression when, by sheer concentration it is turned inside out and becomes

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its opposite. Ego into All. Even Huysmans failed; he gave his arch egotist such bad health that he couldn't reach the final. I, on the other hand, may say I have never felt better. Yet I am carrying my egotism to the point at which I'm about to pass the sense barrier, which must be as dangerous as the speed of sound, in order to come out on the other side with an affirmation of the universal self in precipitate which will enable the young and, I hope, the unborn to behold themselves, their real destiny, their true personality, in a kind of magic mirror, as I see you all in the crystal ball of this chandelier. So I hope to come down to you, one day:

> *'Like that self-begotten bird*
> *In the Arabian woods embost*
> *That no second knows or third*
> *And lays e'erwhile a holocaust. . . .'"*

His voice was spell-binding as Casals' 'cello. We sat on in silence, watching the sixteen candles gutter. "After all, what a criminal thing it is that my Yquem can produce such an effect when my prose cannot: yet one should be able to put the very bouquet of all the summers one has enjoyed into language, the 'pourriture noble' of the grapes, the October glory of the mottled leaves, the weaving supplication of the tendrils, the patch of brown spreading on the golden quince. And that reminds me—I don't quite get all my vitamin C from Norman here—we still attempt a few freaks in the conservatory. Laurian, will you bring them in?" She disappeared and quickly returned with a cut-glass dish of what looked like cheap cocktail sausages. "Here you are, Daddy—and, on top, my own special treat that I was keeping till tomorrow—a solitary passion fruit from the pride of the plant-house." I remarked a wrinkled purplish object like a decayed ping-pong ball. "Splendid. I'd never even noticed it! I shall wait till I'm truly five and fifty and take it up to bed at midnight. Meanwhile, who will try an *Actinidia*? Norman, I'm sure you'd like a change from your régime of Cox and Worcester! You may have a green finger. Try one of my little brown thumbs!" Norman seized the nasty furry creature and proceeded to skin it, revealing a blackish slime. "Are you sure they're ripe?" "Ripe as we'll ever get them." "What exactly are they?" I ventured. "My pet plant—*Actinidia sinensis*, the Chinese gooseberry, as pretty a climber as you could wish and excellent in a cold-house, where *Passiflora edulis* is such a bad starter. 'Male and female created he them.' We've just a pair. Who's never had one?" "I ate some last year," said Julian. "Me too," said Cressida, "we'll share one this time!" They started pulling at it like a cracker and Julian got the biggest half which he managed to swallow. Cressida only nibbled hers and made a face. By now we were all sharing them, and pulling at them with our neighbour, Ginger with Norman, Mona with Hugh, Morty with Sacharissa, and Laurian with me. She won the larger half: I tasted mine, it was quite pleasant and, indeed, very like an insipid gooseberry, but better packed. Laurian was licking hers, as if it were an ice-cream cone, and her tongue came out like a pointed lizard flickering scarlet over the broken fruit. Something seemed to turn over inside me and I looked panic-stricken into her steady eyes, which matched the brown-green berry. "That leaves one over for me to take to bed," laughed Sir Mortimer, as he placed it with his passion fruit and his Pitmaston russet. "A liberal 'en tout cas' for birthday night-starvation. I've often thought with affection of the great fruit-eaters. Louis XIV always had a tableful beside him. You can see one in the big portrait in the Wallace Collection. And that Pope who died of eating too many of those little yellow figs—and poor Mussolini. Do you remember, Hugh, when Lina Waterfield went to interview him and he showed her his latest photos and asked her what she thought. Then he held one up and chuckled, '*Sempre più terribile* and how do I do it?'" ("Always more awe-inspiring," he translated for Mona.) "Then the Duce pointed to a basket and bellowed: 'Frutta, frutta, frutta!'" "Well, he wouldn't have marched to Rome on one of these," said Cressida, "he'd have fallen before you could

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say 'Dov'è la ritirata.'" She rose and held her skirt wide as in a Velasquez, while all the women followed. Julian kept the door open, Sacharissa tacked out majestically under full canvas, Mona doggedly behind her, Laurian in her white satin sauntered off under protest, still munching an apple; and then the men closed round the decanter, which was parked in front of Hugh Curry Rivel. I now sat between him and Ginger Bartlett, Morty on his other side, then came Julian Frere and the fruit farmer. Hugh should by rights have passed me the port, instead he glared at me with distaste and turned away. "Morty," he drawled, "do you mind if I give you a back-hander," and he slid the decanter over to him. I was livid. "Yes," he continued, "you can't beat a red hock, I always say, at the turn of the year." Julian spilt the port as he helped himself, after Morty, who then sent the decanter back in the proper direction, and I poured out a glass with a concentration which was not lost on my neighbour. Ginger looked uncomfortable, but filled up his, and Norman took a very little, seeming sadder than ever, while only Hugh appeared master of the situation. I began to miss Laurian. All the glow and warmth and promise had faded from the scene. It was a city of the dead. The candles had grown long black 'thieves' which were dripping wax on to the polished table; I was sitting in front of Cressida's array of half-emptied glasses, which were all savaged with lipstick. Sacharissa, I noticed, had put a cheap cigarette out in her finger-bowl and another was stubbed into the remains of the *Actinidia*. Mona had spilt the mustard with her cheese soufflé and left a pile of blackened bread pellets, while someone else had buckled their silver-gilt dessert fork on a home-grown pear. I felt suddenly drowning, as if sinking desperately into an abyss of lost identity after Curry Rivel's rudeness and Julian Frere's hostile stare. "Who are you?" I asked myself. "And who the hell cares? Laurian, help, rescue, au secours!" Then I looked up. She was there, smiling from her mother's portrait, the round, dark, melting, Sir Peter Lely face, the eyes veiled in compassionate intelligence. My lost self found its way home.

"Tell me, Mr. Curry Rivel," I lobbed back, "used you to find a red hock any help as an aphrodisiac?" "My dear young man," he threatened, "don't you know your 'Paneros'? The answer is there ain't no sich animal." "What about yohimbine? Even Douglas admitted that." "Certainly, Julian, but it is a dangerous drug which can only be administered under medical supervision." "I once read an ancient art of love," Sir Mortimer mediated, "which recommended only two cures—satyrion, whatever that is, and skirret, a herb which once flourished in our cottage gardens." "Satyrion, my dear Morty, is an orchid," said Norman, "whose bulbs have always suggested testicles and hence potency to the old and foolish, and skirret, a Chinese plant which spread to Germany where it was much fancied by the ancient Romans. Skirret has long white roots, rather like parsnip, sweetish to the taste and faintly phallic. *Sias siarum*. You can probably get it from Bunyards." "Geese are very fond of it." "Ha! Geese! My book said that even to hold it in the hand reassembled the vital juices." "Like an electric eel," said Julian. "I've heard dear old Arnold Bennett say you can't beat oysters and champagne," volunteered Ginger Bartlett. "You can't beat anno domini either," said Sir Mortimer. "One consolation," went on Hugh, "is that we can only be stimulated at our age by what properly belongs to our libido. No more false starts, no barking up the wrong tree or ringing a stale doorbell." "Ringing the wrong doorbell can sometimes be rather amusing," wheezed the publisher. "But I know what you mean. We can still keep a gel, but we can't expect her to be faithful." "Suppose, Hugh, you are married, though," said Sir Mortimer. "Then I'm sorry for you. For if at our age we will stand to attention only for our secret desires, then they are irregular verbs which are seldom to be conjugated in the marriage bed. Still, most wives have now so much on in side bets that they don't make such a fuss as they used. They hardly notice whether their husband is there or not. How would you like to have to make a public demonstration of your bed-manship, Sir Mortimer, with Cressida as your

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opponent in the centre court? That's what might have happened to you in your beloved 17th century, and I don't suppose a second helping of *Sias siarum* or satyrion would have been of much help." We all stared at Curry Rivel and then at Sir Mortimer, who was spellbound. He gazed at Hugh with large wondering eyes that bulged slightly, so that one could see their profile sideways, like his daughter's; his mouth was slightly open and the tip of his tongue protruded. "Go on," he whispered, "what would have happened?" Rivel stuck out a long, minatory forefinger. I noticed the tuft of reddish hair on the phalanx. "I will tell you." We all gulped some port. "But I can't tell you very much. It was called 'Le Congrès' and though it had been abolished by Justinian as unchristian the women seem to have got it put back in France about the middle of the 16th century. You remember that a marriage could be dissolved if the husband was shown through some defect in his equipment to be unfit for copulation and generation. Such as caused the divorce between the Emperor Lothair and his queen, Teutoberga. The smallness of the member, I believe, was in that case generally accepted as the obstacle. However, such malformations are infrequent and the object of the public congress was to present a husband accused by his wife of impotence with a chance to prove himself a man in front of some independent witnesses, usually the Bishop's steward and his ecclesiastical court. It met with considerable opposition and was described as simply a pretext for divorce thought up by lecherous ladies who had put the idea into the judges' heads, for only one man in a thousand can satisfy so sceptical an audience, and he would be an exhibitionist rather than a marvel of fecundity. During the hundred years while the Congress was reintroduced into France there was a great increase in the number of marriages thus dissolved, and so in 1677 the Parliament of Paris abolished it. The repeal arose from the case of René de Cordouan, Marquis de Langey, in 1659. He had been summoned by his first wife to prove his potency in public congress and had failed. By his next wife, Diane de Navailles, he had had seven children. Another Frenchman who failed in his congress before the episcopal court of Le Mans in 1655 was able afterwards to force his wife to produce their legitimate son and so obtained his acquittal. But I hope Cressida is not threatening you with such an ordeal," he went on, "for I don't believe it would cut any ice with a modern jury. If, however, you should fancy the experiment for its own sake, Morty, you couldn't do better than begin with a selected audience from around this table. You would feel among friends. I'm sure dear Cressida would accord you this concession, and even if we detected no deformity and you yet failed signally and publicly to perform your married obligations, you might still claim to have been bewitched, that some enemy had knotted a piece of wolf's tendon or cat skin with coloured thread while the priest was proclaiming 'ego vos jungo' at your wedding; they had 'noué l'aiguillette,' as it was called, and the only cure for that would be for you to urinate through your lady's wedding ring —which at our time of life, my dear Morty, is not as easy as it looks."

I found his monologue quite as repellant as much else that had shocked me since my arrival, but I also thought it of considerable interest although no way to address a great man, and I was all the more surprised therefore when Julian Frere suddenly rose to his feet, clapped his hand over his wide clown's mouth and began to zigzag, snipe-like towards the door. "My God!" yelled Sir Mortimer — for Julian, his free hand thrust forward like a sleep-walker's, was working his way up to a china cabinet. "The Sèvres, the Sèvres," squeaked Mortimer. In a flash Ginger Bartlett had grabbed him; he spun him round like a blindfolded figure and set him off on a straight course to the door. "That's the last of your tame Boswell, Morty. I'm afraid we shall have lost him for the rest of the evening. Mr. Kemble will have to deputise." "You might at least apologise to Julian, Mr. Rivel," I put in, "you've shocked him to the core!"

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"I think when you are more used to the ways of this house you will realise that it is the Tuke Holdsworth '20 to which he should have apologised for his 'non sum dignus.'" "Thank you, Ginger," said Sir Mortimer. "As usual, we talk and you act—I haven't forgotten the evening when the Waterford punch bowl went. He has the most extraordinary cunning in this condition," said Sir Mortimer to me; "he can break the back of a rosewood chair simply by the angle he sits in it. An unconscious knowledge of tensile stresses. We have no punch bowl now, but a silver centre-piece—Cromwellian too, a real 'Ironside'—it can look after itself." "What are the flowers in it?" "I'm glad you asked; another little surprise for our local green-fingers. You behold the fabulous Egyptian lotus, or *Nelumbia negundo,* the sacred bean. For the perfect dinner party I need such flowers with no scent. Otherwise they might confuse the wine. They must also be large and firm yet not too tall and hold up well so that we can hear general conversation round my table, if so we choose, yet not see each other too easily. I'd rather look at them. And —why not? They should be unique. 'Human beans,' as Pythagoras said. You grow them too?" He turned to Norman. "No, I haven't the heat unfortunately." "It's not just the heating. I don't believe they would stand commercial exploitation and a series of scalding inoculations and monthly sprayings from large chemical contraptions so that they might increase, enlarge, defy the blights and viruses and wasps, red spider and fungi, lose all quality and delicacy and bring in a sound three per cent in alternate years." There was a distant noise of breaking glass and flushing toilets, a crash from the hall and women's voices. Sir Mortimer rose. "I think we should follow my young admirer's example and try to join the ladies, for I expect they are all in pieces."

As we left, Norman drew his host back into the dining-room. Hugh and Ginger crossed the hall into the drawing-room and I found time to slip off to the lavatory in the hall which Julian had vacated. When I came back I passed the dining-room door and overheard Sir Mortimer in his old tone of authority. "Impossible, quite impossible." "That is final?" "Absolutely, my dear chap." I hurried away as the door opened. I think it is wrong to eavesdrop, though it's different, of course, just to listen for a moment, in case it concerns oneself.

No sooner was I in the drawing-room than I made a bee-line for Laurian who was looking at a photograph album, but I had first to pass a narrow Regency sofa. "Ah, Mr. Kemble—now you can tell us." I found myself squeezed down between Cressida and Sacharissa. "Tell you what?" "Why, all about yourself. How many questions will you answer?" As she spoke Sacharissa managed to make her words vibrate like the silence after Big Ben. Her expression held a contemptuous impertinence which seemed to strip me of all defences. She had only to say the word "Mr." to make me feel completely ridiculous. Cressida took it up. "Will you promise — cross my heart and swear — to answer six questions—three from each—absolutely truthfully?" "What's my reward?" "You shall claim your reward when we know how you've answered. It might be a surprise." "All right," I agreed weakly. I always answer all questions truthfully if only they'd known. "But first, some coffee," said Cressida, "or I shall have failed in my knightly duties. Black?" "Thank you." "One lump?" "Two." "Brandy or Crême de Menthe?" "Neither, thank you." "Cigarettes?" "I'd rather have a chocolate." She took one also and drew back her lips to bite it slowly and neatly in two with her small white teeth. It meant, I thought, "This is how I eat things. This is how I could eat you. I am a dangerous animal"—except that, like everything she did, it might have come out of some play. "Well, here we go. Question one—how old are you?" "Twenty-six." Then from Sacharissa, "Two — are you married?" "No." "Have you got a mistress?" "No." "Are you a virgin?" I looked at this large blooming woman with her mocking expression. What should I say? I gazed into her dark eyes. "Fortunately—yes." She turned to Cressida. "Your witness."

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"Are you queer?" "Fortunately, no." "Are you in love with Laurian?" I felt like jelly. For a long moment I could not answer. Then I looked straight at her. "For a half an hour —until I met you——" "And since you've met me?" "Oh, Lady Gussage, that's the seventh question! I claim my reward." "Quite right, jeune homme," said Sacharissa. "What shall it be?" "I'll sleep on it and let you know." "All right—but answer one more question. What's your Christian name?" "Stephen." "Stephen—it would be!" I felt like a child whom the wrong person has tickled.

SIR MORTIMER appeared and offered me a thin cigar which I refused. I don't smoke myself and I find it a horrifying spectacle to watch normally civilised people turning into repressed maniacs as they cough and choke or clutch their pockets, interrupt each other's stories, pinch each other's matches, fill their own cases when no one is looking, and drop ash into cups and cushions or, worst of all, between the pages of books. But I prefer cigars. There are fewer of them. They smell nicer (non-smokers have a very keen sense of smell) and people are more careful where they deposit the ash. But not the stub, and I know of few filthier odours the next morning than an old cigar end soaked in coffee or brandy lying in a waste-paper basket by the bed. My mother was always singing a song about "a cigarette with lipstick's traces," which seemed to me a catalogue of everything I disliked. How would Laurian pass the test? I went off to investigate. To my horror she was sitting with Mr. Frere, playing Halma. "Feeling better?" I ventured. He looked up, held his finger to his lips, tapped his head, hunched his shoulders over the board where the ridiculous little men were copulating with each other in intricate coloured tentacles, and waved me away. Sir Mortimer patted me on the shoulder. "We're going off to have a rubber of bridge in my study—there'll be some drinks in a moment." He opened a door at the far end of the room and disappeared with Bartlett, Curry Rivel, and Sacharissa. I didn't feel like another *tête-à-tête* with either Cressida or the Farrans and so I tried the door at the opposite side. It opened into the conservatory. I switched on the light. It was a delightful place, a Regency addition to the house with one of those swinging bamboo sofas in the middle, some painted, palm-shaped, wrought-iron columns, and a variety of plants and creepers round the walls. I lay down on the sofa, rocked it gently, and let the cool air soothe my brow, which was fuming with jealousy and Tuke Holdsworth. I knew my short life had reached a turning-point. In London my paper awaited me, the clean packet of crisp, fresh, bad novels, with the best plums already picked out, which was my weekly fare, the nosebag I had to eat through; the ever-present chance of some extra bit of work, an art exhibition, a trip to Paris or Bordeaux or Bâle or Aberdeen which was paid for by some cultural association or a group of wine merchants, anybody with a vested interest in claret or Burns or Bernoulli or Mérimée, perhaps even a "*rencontre intellectuelle*" at Geneva, a session of the European parliament at Strasbourg or, most prized of all, the Biennale at Venice. A chance of something to do, somewhere to go, when the married experts were too broke to take their wives. Then home to my rather superior boarding-house in Chelsea with the Italian cooking and the young men with a Foreign Office manner, my old school friend John Rainer on the floor below, my leafy attic looking over to Wren's hospital, my own novel to try to finish, the single Paul Klee drawing over the gas fire, the Tallboys Edition, complete, by my bed. This was the known world, safe, if I chose, for another ten years, while beyond this door where I sat were the dragons, the *terra incognita*, the lovely inscrutable female animal at the Halma table. Should I press forward or withdraw? I thought of her mother's glance of reassurance from the portrait and of the wild leg which I had nearly tamed. Then I thought of wives and of women in general. Tears and screams and bad temper, girdles with empty stockings attached lying on chairs, lipstick, hair combings, tiny safety razors going drily over legs

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and arm-pits, false laughs into telephones, my mother's thin and angry face and my father's sneering tones. "My idea of hell, Isabel, would be to have to come to you for money." "And mine, *dear*, to depend on *you* for sex." Nymphonaggers! So that way Halma leads. . . . There was a footstep on the gravel; the outer door of the conservatory opened and Sir Mortimer strode in. He looked tired, white, and harassed, and I hurried to explain that I myself had just stepped by to cool off. "How's the bridge?" I ended. "I suppose you are dummy." "Bridge—ha!—dummy," he repeated. "Yes, that is exactly what I am—you know something of gardening?" "Nothing at all, I am afraid. What are all these?" "Creepers and climbers mostly—I'm rather keen on them; so feeble and so aimless yet they get exactly where they want; they rise by doodling: oh the cruel strength of the weak! They're not as alive as a good book, but they're certainly more alive than the average human 'bean'—this one in the tub here is a scented rhododendron, Lady Alice Fitzwilliam. The tub, by the way, is copied from those in the Orangerie at Versailles. This is delicate *Mandevilla suaveolens*, this is delicious *Hoya carnosa*, the wax plant with its brown bootlaces, and here is *Passiflora edulis*, the Brazilian passion flower that's suddenly laid an egg. Mustn't lose it by the way." He patted his pocket. "This is *Semele androgyne* from Tenerife—a rum beggar; this lot are some of the more particular clematis and jasmine, straight as a corkscrew, ruthless as a little woman.This is a *Lardizabala*—hasn't earned its keep yet—but I hope to eat that one day too. Here's a humdrum vine, Madresfield Court, a black muscat—nice plant and no mildew—here's a yellow wattle—mimosa to you—which Cressida's very fond of; and here, in this tank, the wonderful Sacred Lotus. Of course it's not really quite a cold-house, as when the drawing-room door's left open we can warm it up. We cheat, I'm afraid. But I like to tease poor Norman with his utilitarian outlook and his limited intelligence; all his fruit have such dreadful names, like 'Belle de Boskoop' and 'American Mother.' This one's a queer chap by the way. He must have come in as a seed with my 'cup-and-saucer' creeper here, *Cobæa scandens*. I thought he was a weed at first, but he soon got round me with those jolly red leaves. Nice habit too, and this year, after some scented white flowers last spring, he's sprouting berries." It didn't look up to much to me. "Perhaps it's a castor-oil plant." "Oh no, nothing so ordinary as that or we'd be using it for ordeals. There's a good subject for you by the way—ordeals of all nations—fire, water, the Calabar bean, the tanghin tree of Madagascar, the manchineel of the Caribs, the deadly upas under which condemned criminals were allowed to sleep. So simple — the innocent vomit, the guilty digest and die. There must be something to it. And here's my first and last love, *Daphne odora*—she's not much to look at now, but in February when there's so little else, she comes out in a tightly packed cluster of pale flowers with the most intense of all the jasmine, orange-blossom, viburnum type of scents. It's not an odour of spring, but one that defies winter and 'the sullen edicts of her mutinous season,' and the more you smell it the deeper it recedes, layer within layer. Of course it's tender, but it's August that kills them, not February. You don't smoke, I've noticed. No writer should. You'll keep a nose for these things. My young Boswell now," he tapped his cigar ash over the *Daphne*, "he believes that 'the road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.' We used to call him 'the Dancing Don' until he danced his way out of a fellowship. And now something tells me I too shan't be able to rely on his services much longer. Perhaps some God has sent you to me in his place. You live by the will, I think, and you're too young to have been dominated by psychoanalysis. It's ruined poor Julian, ruined his health, his judgment, and his self-respect—and of course his vocabulary; he knows the answer before we can think of the question, he can't even dance now; it's become 'a compensatory play therapy.'" "But he still admires you, sir, I can see that. When Mr. Curry Rivel went too far in there, he was sick." "Innocence

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upchucked! Well, I suppose you could put it like that—but never trust him. All admirers are alike. They want to get inside your skin and to have it they'll flay you alive." "Oh, Sir Mortimer—I'm an admirer too." "I suspect you want something else of mine." "Yes, your style." "Are you sure that's all? Well, I bequeath it to you. It's quite easy—a little oil in the vinegar, a little vinegar in the oil, and a clove of garlic rubbed round the bowl. It's not my style of course—Chateaubriand, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Huysmans—they all knew the secret. You must try to feel unpleasant things so truthfully that they become pleasant, and vice-versa. Laugh at the funeral, weep at the wedding. Remember we all carry in ourselves an inexhaustible source of vitality which is pure spirit. Art is the only vehicle which can hold and subjugate its burning activity. Life is unworthy of such fire; except at rare moments life drags us down. But art, alas, is for the few, for the lucky, for the lonely. Art is always round the corner. For the majority there is nothing but sex and money, money and sex, 'at nos vino scortisque demersi?' And how they all hate art! Especially literature; and none of course hate it more than the literary—so remember: creation is its own reward. Creation—not the processing and packaging of what we have created—and it is our only pleasure and our only reward. After all, what's literature? An arrangement of vowels and consonants—that's poetry. And prose then?—an arrangement of consonants and vowels. There's nothing in the world so beautiful as one's next book or so bad as the last one. I divide people up into those who produce life and beauty and those who consume them, and when I have to make up my mind about someone, I always apply my test. Producers and Consumers—it sounds so simple. And I prefer producers who can't produce to consumers who are disguised as producers, the better to consume us. There are some of each here tonight; I wonder if you can tell them apart—you should learn to recognise the consumers by their vocabulary—it's more pretentious — they are nearly always rich or homosexual or both — the rich used to be patrons of art, now they are the artist's most jealous rivals. Three maladies I have lived to see destroy my world—or are they the same one? The increasing meanness of the rich, the ubiquitous infiltration of homosexuality, and everybody a snob about everything. And now I must get back to my rubber." He went out by the garden door and made off towards the study, which probably had a French window. I contemplated the "productive" vine in its October livery, rank and barnacled, mottled with mauve and crimson, still carrying one or two desiccated bunches of black grapes which drooped pathetically among the carefree exuberance of the "consuming" evergreens. I picked up a fallen leaf of the unknown plant and put it in my wallet. Then I felt cold again and opened the inner door to return to the fire.

LAURIAN made room for me beside her on the sofa. She smiled and then I understood that there can be moments at the beginning of a relationship when by a visual intuition the eyes pierce right through to the essential magic of another person, which is indeed the vitality of pure spirit. My jealousy had been groundless. I even tried to pass a little of my happiness on to poor Mona, who was by my other side. "Do you have to get up very early to fruit-farm?" I said. "No, not very. But don't worry, we're leaving all the same." "Oh, I didn't mean that." Then Cressida drew me in to her conversation with the other two men. "I'm just describing the perfect dish for the perfectionist's birthday," she trilled, "do listen — Stephen — Julian — Mona—Norman! Well, you take a large olive and stuff it with capers and anchovy, then soak it in pure olive oil and tuck it inside a beccafico—that's a little fig bunting—after cutting off its head and claws—the bird's I mean. Then you put the beccafico inside a nice fat ortolan, and after taking most of its bones out, as well as cutting off its claws and its head, you stuff the ortolan inside a nice fat juicy quail, straight off the vines, and you wrap a vine leaf round it—we can certainly manage that—and stuff it in a small plover.

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Put the plover, with a slice of very thin bacon round it, inside a fine young partridge—if you can—and the partridge inside a lovely tender woodcock, well hung. And the woodcock, with a few croûtons of bread, inside a teal, and the teal, wrapped in bacon of course, inside a young guinea-fowl—they're too tough after the first year when they get their 'jugglers.' And the guinea-fowl inside a fine white Surrey chicken, and the chicken inside a capercailzie, very well hung indeed —that's always the hardest part—and the capercailzie inside a nice green goose—make sure its feet are still soft and its beak is flexible. And the goose inside a splendid Christmas turkey—and finally a real gourmet stuffs the turkey inside an enormous bustard—one used to see them in Hungary—and then you fill in all the gaps with Lyon chestnuts, sausage meat, and stuffing. Next you put the whole thing in a large pot with onions pricked with cloves, ham chopped up very small, celery, mignonette (why mignonette? wait!), a 'bouquet garni,' plenty of bacon, salt, pepper, spices, coriander, and a couple of cloves of garlic. Seal it up hermetically with pastry so that it's quite airtight. Then cook it very slowly for twenty-four hours on a gentle fire so that it gets the heat equally, preferably in the oven. Now, listen carefully—we're getting to the holy of holies of cooking! We have here the quintessence of forest, marsh, plain and farmyard, all these juices and emanations are being stealthily volatilised and united and blended into the most exquisite whole, a unique gastronomic experience—but meanwhile this quintessence has penetrated to the very heart of the whole matter, that is to the olive. So you carve open the bustard very carefully and throw it out of the window or give it to the dogs if you have any; same treatment for the turkey, the goose, the capercailzie, the chicken, the guinea-fowl, the teal, the woodcock, the partridge, the plover, the quail, the fieldfare, the ortolan, the poor little beccafico, until finally in a spirit of true gratitude and admiration we serve dear old Morty up the olive. He will have to hold it for a long time in his mouth. I'm told it's 'vâchement succu. . . .' "

WE ALL laughed, some louder than others, according to our sense of 'déjà lu.' I felt as if I had listened to a recital of the whole of Cressida's love-life, and she was still preening herself on her cleverness when the Farrans rose to bid us goodnight. "Do come over to tea with us tomorrow," said Mona, "it's quite close, just the other side of the village, the old mill, you can't miss it. Now I must find my outer shoes." Norman shook my hand with gentle persistence. "Yes, do come, if you can tear yourself away from all this magnificence. And bring Laurian." They had just left when the bridge four appeared and pressed us all to whisky. I wanted to ask Curry Rivel a question. "Tell me," I said, "I've been thinking about what you told us. Did you ever 'nouer l'aiguillette' yourself?" "Good heavens no—well, not exactly, but when I lived in the Tarn I do remember a strange affair. There was a young chap whom I considered had been impertinent. He was just getting married to a maid of mine. As he left the villa I called out, 'That settles it, je te nouerai l'aiguillette.' I thought no more about it. But he did—and he believed it—and for a month he couldn't go to bed with his wife, and the harder he tried the worse it became, she grew more and more uncooperative; when he got into her bed his stomach would swell like a pumpkin and he could only obtain relief by keeping altogether out of her way. She, of course, began to loathe the sight of him. Naturally, I tried to make everything all right when she told me, but they wouldn't listen and made out to everyone I had bewitched them. In the end it was only cleared up by the priest by whom they had been married. Cock's testicles on broad beans broken under the bed are a cure (the ancient food of the dead incidentally), so be careful not to cross my path, young fellow!" Suddenly everyone remembered the time and began to wish Sir Mortimer a happy birthday. Cressida made us all sing the doleful jingle. The great writer stood in the doorway as he accepted our congratulations, bidding us goodnight and looking slowly round at the china birds and the flowers and the bright fire, the Watteau and Tiepolo drawings

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and a pair of elongated figure-paintings by Marcellus Laroon. I thought I had never seen anyone so handsome, so compelling, with his Mediterranean figure, his warm and luminous personality dominating the room. He had a large red notebook under one arm and his plate of fruit in the other. He raised it above his head when he saw me and handed me the book to hold while he waved his other hand to the company. "Ah, goodnight, my young disciple. Remember my advice and steer clear of consumers. They'll gobble you up like they've gobbled me. Julian, you will show Mr. Kemble to his room, which is opposite yours, and you will treat him with the deference due to your successor, for your apprenticeship, I fear, is ending. I am afraid there is nothing more I can teach you. Go forth and prosper! But you—Stephen Kemble:

'But you, whom ev'ry Muse and Grace adorn
Whom I foresee to better fortune born
Be kind to my remains; and, oh, defend
Against your judgement your departed friend!
Let not th'insulting Foe my fame pursue
But shade those laurels which descend to you.' "

It was spoken with such mellow and piercing sweetness that we all applauded. For a moment he still remained smiling in the doorway, a glowing bearded Wotan, his spear unshattered, while he performed a vague gesture of benediction over Laurian and Cressida with the raised fruit, and then he bowed to Sacharissa with his inscrutable expectant smile, seized his red notebook from me, and disappeared upstairs, his stooping, rather heavy back bunched in to his wine-dark smoking jacket, a bald patch showing from behind like a pink celluloid duck's bottom clamped on his head, his chestnut hair a shade too long over his velvet collar. One could see nature had generally intended him to face his audience. A moment afterwards Hugh solemnly offered his arm to Sacharissa, who also said goodnight to me. " 'Whom every Muse and every Grace adorn'—we shall see, we shall see." I noticed that she was taking a large whisky with her. No sooner were they out of the room than Julian returned to life. "You heard that, Cressida—I've got the sack. The same old formula—nothing more we can teach you, we fear. You should find a wider scope for your activities outside the curriculum. Too old at thirty-three! Humanism is a club with an entrance fee of £2,000 a year." He clapped his hands and a skew-eyed smile froze his wide mouth, his long legs shot out sideways like Valentin le Desossé's, as with his white face glazed like a Rouault clown's, he trucked up to Cressida, firing his hand like a Sten-gun, then tap-danced a little, 'broke' professionally, and whirled her off round the room. She, too, danced like a Degas ballerina, with her nubbly little legs, on their points, and her supple fingers cracking. They carried on an isolated dialogue between their personalities, she twirling and pirouetting and interpolating fragments of bolero, he beginning the Miller's Dance from *The Three Cornered Hat* and then bopping it up into a kind of expressionistic stomp, his dead-pan face with its lock of black hair sagging in front of him in a stylised rictus. Effective, I had to admit, though vulgar. I, too, would have liked to ask Laurian to dance, but I felt handicapped as there was no music. Julian came to a stop with one of those fading cadenzas that we perform in our dreams, picked up Cressida, threw her over his shoulder, and carried her out of the room with one little leg outstretched, the other bent, and her arm held out with finger crooked, like a mechanical toy. Laurian said, "I'd better show you to your room; I don't suppose anyone else will." The house was very simply arranged, the pattern of hall with living-room leading into study on one side and dining-room leading into kitchen on the other was carried out on two floors; Cressida and Sir Mortimer were on either side of the stairhead, each with a bathroom, while Sacharissa and Hugh Curry Rivel, with a bathroom between them, looked out over the back. On the floor above were Laurian and her bathroom and Julian, and on the other

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Ginger Bartlett, another bathroom, myself. The Italian couple were in a built-on flat off the kitchen and were helped by two girls from the village during the day. The bathrooms had been made out of dressing-rooms and powder closets and in no way altered the architecture of the house. A light came from under Sir Mortimer's door as we passed and another from my neighbour the publisher. I noticed with relief a fitted basin in my bedroom; I didn't want to wash in the bathroom between us until he was out of the way, for of all the visitors he was the one with whom I had established least contact, though some day he might prove the most useful. "I hope you have everything," said Laurian. I looked round at the pleasant white room with an electric fire burning, a pair of bird pictures by Simon Bussy, a caricature of Roger Fry, and a scribbled Lear landscape, at the single four-poster in plain mahogany with my white Egyptian cotton pyjamas neatly laid out, at the water carafe and biscuits by my bed and the little row of books, three or four volumes of Turgenev, a dozen old copies of *Life and Letters* and *Horizon*, *Wylder's Hand*, *Modern Love*, *Gryll Grange*, *Jacob's Room*, Francis Birrell's anthology of famous last words; I noticed the pale Samarkand rug, the heavy red curtains drawn across the mild October night, the glowing bedside-lamp, and I knew that I had everything that I could possibly want. The room epitomised the enlightened pre-war comfort of which I realised I could never breathe enough; the security which now was out of nearly every reach, which once the addiction had taken root, one would almost commit murder to preserve. Indeed many people had killed Germans, Italians, Austrians, Hungarians, Japanese, just in order to keep it going, for to fight for one's country is to fight for one's standard of living, and if these things in themselves were not enough, there was Laurian standing beside me. "You need a *calm* mother" as my father once said. "A rock to jump off." It came over me that I hadn't felt quite so strongly about her since dinner. Something had broken the spell. It was another spell—her father's voice and perhaps more than a little bit of Cressida's. I was no longer obedient only to her low tones and direct gaze, but made restless by her father's words; his interest in me was breathlessly exciting, but when I tried to think of that fine head which reflected the extraordinary Renaissance wholeness of his personality, I couldn't see him plainly either — only Cressida's body being carried out on Julian's shoulder, the rigid thigh, the bent brown arm. "Thank you very much, for absolutely everything. Where are you?" She led me across the passage and opened the door into an even warmer-looking room where I glimpsed a row of little silver gymkhana cups and a smaller sketch or painting of her mother. "Goodnight. Breakfast downstairs from nine onwards—dressing-gowns permitted," she said abruptly, and closed the door.

I HAVE stayed too little in other people's houses not to find the nights very strange. When the guests are put away in their boxes till the morning and the theatre closed, there must be a simultaneous lifting of masks all over the house, a confrontation in the mirror of wrinkle and roll as memories and medicine bottles are brought out and the bray of one's own voice dies away. I wondered if I was going to have one of my own "blackouts" among these unfamiliar surroundings when one is conscious only of consciousness and absolutely of nothing else for an interminable second while the heart seems to stop. Then as I got into my bed I thought of all the other single visitors who had used it, their hopes and desires, their cumulative flatulence and indigestion, the worries they had tried to shut out between Saturday and Monday and to which they had inevitably to return. Tomorrow I must have a look at the visitors' book. These always fascinate me; I like to watch the self-assured signatures that turn up week after week suddenly falter and disappear as they get too old or ill or poor to be asked again, as the sociability is squeezed out of them, or as the genial host dies and the philistine heir takes his place. I like also to see the grand beginnings of a reign peter out into a string of

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poor relations and punctual toadies until the page begins to die a natural death and the guests' names are pencilled in afterwards because they can't be bothered to sign them, and the book itself starts on its downhill journey to the junk shop or the loft. All the windy pretensions of a generation of noisy nobodies who turn up to stuff themselves every Christmas and suddenly conk out like the turkeys that were fattened for them or the bad champagne on their sour stomachs! Consumers, consumers disguised as producers —you should know them by their vocabulary: "*Couldn't* have enjoyed myself more—*couldn't* have been more agreeable—bless you, you *dear* people, thanks for a *wonderful* time." Then it came over me that in these houses they have a habit of taking one's clothes away to be brushed in the early morning so that when I get up I never can find the comb which I always carry. I jumped out of bed to turn out my pockets. There was my wallet, with the ten-shilling note I was going to leave as tip—consumer's conscience money—my return ticket, another pound and some silver, the leaf I had picked up; there was my nylon comb in its little case. And yet an absence was postulating itself. My God—where was the obituary? I went through all my pockets and three times over the breast-pocket where I seemed to remember having stuffed it. It might still be in my overcoat or it might have fallen out somewhere downstairs. I knew I should get no sleep till I found it. Supposing the servants swept it up tomorrow morning! I put on my brown dressing-gown and red slippers and tiptoed out. All was quiet in the passage and there was a little light on the landing from a window above the stairs. When I came to the next floor, I listened. Silence. I crept on down, crossed the hall, went into the dining-room and turned on the light. There was a smell of apples, port, and stale cigar smoke. Some preliminary clearing-up had been done and there was no sign of any strip of paper beside my place. I went into the sitting-room, switched on a lamp, and looked in the sofa where I had been sitting. Not a trace. I was approaching the conservatory and my hand was on the door when I heard a laugh, a low sensual chuckle. Cressida! "Go on—admit it—he's a cross between a rabbit and a ferret." That was Julian's sleazy voice. The answer was another low laugh followed by a slap: the hollow dry detonation of a man's hand on a woman's naked buttock—and then no sound but the rhythmic metal creaking of the swinging garden sofa, groaning and sighing like rigging at night. I turned and ran. Back in the hall I halted and went through my overcoat pockets with no success, and I was tiptoeing up the stairs again when I heard a door open. I shrank back against the wall. Sacharissa stood in the arch of her room, against the light; she was in a flowered and flowing nightgown, one hand was pressed against her chest. She looked absolutely ghastly. She had not just taken her make-up off, she had removed her mask as well. I saw a face haggard with calamity; lines round her neck, lines down from the ends of her mouth, lines on her brow, eyes staring out into some appalling vision with the grey opacity of dead oysters—a drawing of Lady Macbeth by Fuseli, a Regency Clytemnestra. She looked up and down the passage for a moment, then silently closed her door. I continued my ascent and reached my room without incident, only breathing safely again when I was back in bed. Then the words hit me. "A cross between a rabbit and a ferret." Could he mean—would he dare? Again I jumped out of bed, turned on the light, and looked in the glass. My usual round face with the features which passports call "regular"—the blue eyes, curly hair, which has been untruthfully described as albino since my eyebrows and eyelashes are perfectly visible, and the small, tidy mouth—stared back at me. A face "égal à soi-même." No—he must be jealous of me to devise such an insult, and jealous because I had made a strong enough impression on her to give him cause. But the ignominious disloyalty of their relationship!—and under Sir Mortimer's own roof. Should I have opened the door? Should I tell him in the morning? Should I leave? He had relied on me—was it not my duty? I thought again of that bestial laugh, the

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expanding thigh and the sofa creaking like a rowlock, and I was seized in a tumult of horror and fascination. If him, why not me? Then I remembered the liberty he had taken when he pushed my handkerchief down. Could he have pulled the typescript out at the same time? Would I have put it in my breast-pocket? I began once more to mull over the proceedings at the office until I could no longer clearly remember anything. I tried to read, but even Turgenev seemed insipid. I ate my biscuits, drank my water, got out and looked for more books. I discovered a few old novels and then two of Sacharissa's wartime efforts. One was a horrible short-lived best-seller, *Diggory Dock, Smallholder*, in which a city clerk, when rejected for the Army, takes to the land, cultivates a few chalky acres with barley and brussels sprouts, captures a German parachutist, and marries a fascinating "*femme de lettres*" who is the widowed lady of the manor. I think the Ministry of Information must have distributed it. There were only thirty pages but they worked like pentathol.

I was woken by Laurian, fully dressed and very pale. "It is ten o'clock," she said. I have come to tell you that Daddy had a stroke some time during the night and never recovered consciousness. He died about half-an-hour ago. The doctor is with him and wants to see you." She went out without looking at me and spoke from the door, "You had better wait in the dining-room. Angelo will pack for you." In a few minutes I had dressed and shaved and was rushing downstairs. The dining-room was empty, but I detected a small, reproachful spirit flame which still kept vigil over coffee and hot milk and also a poached egg and sausage in a covered dish, prepared before the blow had fallen. Since I seemed to be in some kind of disgrace I relapsed into the greedy, obstinate silence which I had found the best weapon against my parents and afterwards so useful at school and during my glimpse of the Army. It was a fresh country egg, the sausage was brown and crisp, the coffee delicious. I went on to a piece of toast and some bitter Oxford marmalade. Laurian came in just as I had finished. "This is Doctor Hislop," she said. The doctor was thin and sunburnt and looked more like Harley Street than Wiltshire, the type of coming man whose name is last on bulletins of royal illness. "This is a very bad business, Mr. Kemble. I will keep you no longer than is necessary. You knew Sir Mortimer well?" "I only met him once before yesterday, at a cocktail party." "He took a great fancy to you, I understand." "I am very glad to hear it." "He seemed to you in good health and spirits last night?" "Perfectly. I thought he looked very well. Almost too well." "What do you mean by that?" "I mean he had a very high colour." "When was that?" "After dinner —and when he went to bed he was pale." "You didn't see him afterwards?" "Not at all." "I see. Well, as you know, Sir Mortimer had a cerebral hæmorrhage during the night. He was of course a hyper-tensive type, but such things are usually brought on at his age by a shock of some kind. Sometimes by over-exertion, sometimes by bad news, sometimes just by bad temper. This was found on his pillow. Do you recognise it?" "Yes." "You wrote it?" "Yes." "*More than anyone now living Sir Mortimer appreciated the things which he could touch or see*—what on earth do you mean by that?" "I should have thought it was perfectly clear." "Clear that you knew he was going to die when you wrote it?" "No. I mean it is an obituary such as every big newspaper keeps in its files for celebrities." "Then why did you bring it with you?" "I had originally written it as a tribute for his birthday. 'Sir Mortimer Gussage. An appreciation.' My editor did not require this and so he had altered the tenses. The changes in the typescript are his. He will corroborate me if you will get in touch with him." "Then what induced you to show it to Sir Mortimer?" "I never did anything of the kind. The paper disappeared during the evening and I myself think it was stolen and deliberately put in Sir Mortimer's possession by someone who was jealous of me." "Who do you mean?" "Mr. Julian Frere." "That's nonsense." "No, I don't think it is," said Laurian. "Daddy

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said in front of all of us that he accepted Mr. Kemble as a new disciple instead of Julian." "Well, I am afraid I shall have to keep this. I don't think at present an inquest is necessary. Sir Mortimer's rages were proverbial and I had been fearing something like this for the last year or so. With a blood pressure of 200 one can't afford the larger emotions. But in case the authorities should want to look at it, I shall seal it in this envelope here—and may I have your address? I am afraid, Mr. Kemble, that a most malicious error of taste and judgment must lie heavy on your conscience for some years to come." Angelo put his head in. "Signor's taxi here." "You have taken advantage of the hospitality of a great and generous man to play an odious and dangerous practical joke on him, and even if it were through an accident that he came into the possession of this paper, I cannot absolve you from the discourtesy of bringing it into the house with such fatal consequences. You will understand that Lady Gussage is too upset to see you and that her other guests are not minded to. As her medical adviser as well as Sir Mortimer's, I must request you to go." "Certainly. After the way I have been treated I have no wish to stay. I only ask you to show the same alacrity in getting rid of Mr. Frere, who has played this revolting trick on Sir Mortimer and myself. I shall of course consult my solicitors." I found myself replying in exactly the language derived from stormy scenes in Victorian novels, which he had already used to me and I felt a little better, for Laurian had been impressed. Then I remembered Angelo and put my hand in my pocket. I'd left all my money upstairs. "With your permission, I'm going up to fetch my wallet," I said. "I must have left it in the drawer by my bed. Don't wait, please. Goodbye, Laurian. Dr. Hislop, my compliments." I raced on tiptoe up the stairs while they both remained just inside the dining-room. The money was where I'd left it and I was coming back through the silent house when I was seized with an inscrutable impulse. Why not? I had as much right, surely, as anyone. On the first-floor landing I paused, then quietly opened Sir Mortimer's door. There was no one in the room. I walked quickly over and raised the sheet. He lay in perfect repose with the strange emptiness of the dead. The eyes were closed, his pointed beard, sharp nose, and waxen brow were like some painted Elizabethan effigy on a Cotswold tomb, while everything else in the room but his body seemed to pulsate with his indignant and infinitely lonely presence. His expression was withdrawn as if brooding on some unattainable epithet. Only the colour, a high suffused purple round the throat which contrasted with the pallor of the brow, reminded me of the description of Flaubert as viewed by Maupassant. I looked down at the noble head which had for so long spun the words that had created my only valid beliefs and on the one person in the house who didn't believe that I had tried to kill him, the first corpse I had ever seen—my "cold feary father"—then I dropped the sheet. I noticed the big red notebook by his bed and lifted the cover. "EYES, LOOK YOUR LAST," was printed on the fly-leaf in huge capitals. "A valediction" by Mortimer Gussage, and underneath he had written a quotation from Peacock, "Nothing in this world is perfect but the music of Mozart." I turned over the tawny hand-woven pages. They were all blank.

As I was leaving I glanced at the waste-paper basket. A familiar object reposed among the crumpled circulars, the empty husk of the solitary passion fruit, Laurian's birthday gift to her father. An appropriate souvenir! I picked it up and put it in my overcoat pocket. When I got back to the hall (my whole journey had taken only two or three minutes) she was waiting by the door. I noticed the visitors' book on the hall table and felt a wild desire to force it open and perpetuate my abbreviated visit: "Stephen Kemble. Saturday, Oct. 16th – Sunday, Oct. 17th. 'The Sunday Recorder,' Fleet St."—but no further delay was permissible. Laurian spoke: "I waited to tell you that I believe you. I can't say any more. Goodbye. Thank you for coming." "Please answer me one question. Who found him?" "Cressida. She

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went in to see why he hadn't rung for breakfast; that was at half-past nine. He was unconscious, but still breathing then; but he died before Dr. Hislop could get here. He is a Harley Street man who spends week-ends in the village." "And my article?" "She found it on the pillow." "Could she have put it there?" "She would never do such a thing. She adored Daddy." "Had he eaten anything in the night?" "Half a pear and the Pitmaston pippin; the remains were on his plate with his Chinese gooseberry, which he hadn't touched. He usually ate some fruit as soon as he got into bed. I suppose that was about one o'clock this morning." I said nothing. I believe that even as I had apprehended her true self from a glance she had seen into mine. I went up close to her and put my hands on her shoulder. She raised her long, white face. We closed our eyes and let our two bowed foreheads touch, for a second or two, holding our hands together, fingers upward, palm against palm. I felt her sorrow, her solitude, her courage, her devotion to her father flowing into my heart. "Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor / most choice forsaken and most loved despised." I tried to put everything I had felt for father and daughter into the bone in my forehead. "I love you. I will wait for you. When I can help you, send for me," I telepathised through my head. I felt the faint pressure of her nipples firm on my chest as she leant against me. We opened our eyes and were standing again on the wide stone steps by the blue tangle of rosemary. I gave Angelo his ten shillings. "Is Cressida taking it very badly?" I asked. "She has been wonderful. So efficient. Sacharissa is more upset. There's so little for her to do, really—and she had a presentiment." I got into the cab. "You know where to find me?" "Yes." We drove round the gravel sweep in front of the house and then headed down the lime avenue which only a few hours ago I had seen for the first time. Laurian remained in the door with her arm raised in an antique farewell, and from all the concave unrestored panes in the Georgian windows I had the impression of staring eyes. I shrank back into my corner as the driver accelerated through the stone gates and turned down into the valley, swerving to avoid the two Farrans who were walking up to the house. She was red-eyed, holding a large handkerchief and dressed in black, he wore a black tie, this time with green tweeds, and looked straight ahead with an expression not so much of grief as of sheer and utter panic. "The few—the lucky and the lonely," as Sir Mortimer had called us—did not seem to include Mr. Diggory Dock.

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Bertrand de Jouvenel

What is "Communist" Economics?

"And commonly they that live under a monarchy, think it the fault of monarchy; and they that live under the government of democracy, or other sovereign assembly, attribute all the inconveniences to that form of commonwealth. . . ."

Hobbes: LEVIATHAN, Book II, Chap. 18

WITHIN the intelligentsia of the free world, it is a prevalent view that economic and social phenomena "under Communism" differ in essence from what they are "under Capitalism." The present essay is aimed against this opinion. It is proposed to show that all the important features of Soviet economic development upon which the experts agree can easily be explained without any recourse to the "idea of Communism." It will appear in the course of this study that the Soviet purpose of "catching up with American industry" is the *leit-motiv* by reference to which the pieces of the puzzle readily arrange themselves into a coherent pattern. This essay is inspired by Ockham's principle: when seeking to explain, one should not multiply entities and diversify denominations beyond necessity.

Some leading facts

LET us start out with some undisputed facts.

1. The Communist régime has been in existence for thirty-eight years. This is a long time, comparable in French history to the time that elapsed between the execution of Louis XVI and the eviction of Charles X—comprising the course of the French Revolution, the advent, triumphs, and fall of Napoleon, the return and final expulsion of the Bourbons. In terms of American history, it is equivalent to the period between the end of the Civil War and the building up of the great trusts (1900–2); in terms of British history, it is equivalent to the period between the introduction of progressive taxation by Lloyd George and the installation of the Socialist government of 1945. The Communist régime is not in its childhood.

2. Soviet Russia is, as of today, almost three times as large as the U.S. in territory, with a population greater by one-third.

3. Beginning, not with the advent of the régime but in 1928, a process of very rapid industrial expansion has occurred. The volume of industrial production has been multiplied several times. How many times is an apple of discord among experts: which is not surprising in view of the fact that overall volume is compounded of many different factors which can be combined with different weightings. Western estimates range between five and twelve times, eight or nine times being the most widely favoured.

4. It is not disputed that, in the 1928–55 period of growth, the non-agricultural labour force was multiplied 4·2 times and the labour force in industry 4·5 times. And therefore, whatever figure is used to express the multiplication of the industrial product, it is clear that the multiplication of industrial workers has been the chief cause.

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5. It is not disputed among the experts that industrial consumer goods have formed a successively declining fraction of industrial production; and therefore, whatever the growth of industrial production, the increase of available consumer goods has been very much less.

6. It is similarly not disputed that agricultural production, and more specifically the production of food, has increased very little.

7. It has been estimated that the working force of Russia comprises 42 million non-agricultural and possibly 55 million agricultural workers, while the corresponding figures for the U.S. are 54 million and 7 million.*

These facts are practically all we need in order to understand the enormous rise in Soviet industrial production and to surmise that the rise of the average standard of living of the Russian town-worker may have been very slight.

The influx into towns and factories

WHATEVER increase we assume in industrial product, it is beyond question that the multiplication of industrial employment by 4·5 times and the multiplication of non-agricultural employment by 4·2 times† have been its main causes and conditions. Therefore no such degree of increase of industrial production can logically be expected in circumstances where such multiplication of the non-agricultural working force is physically impossible. Take the U.S.: the non-agricultural working force could not be multiplied 4·2 times after 1928 because it was then over 35 million, and would have now to be 153 million—that is to say, almost equal to the total population of the U.S., men, women, and children!

This is schoolboy arithmetic, but it serves to underline a basic condition of the rapid growth of Soviet industrial production: at the outset in 1928, only some 13 per cent of the whole Soviet labour force was engaged in non-agricultural occupations; therefore the volume of manpower in non-agricultural occupations could be multiplied, as it cannot be where this same condition is lacking—where a considerable majority of the labour force is already engaged in such occupations. Another point hardly needs mentioning: Soviet Russia has taken second place among the industrial powers of the world. But this is hardly surprising when she can marshal 42 million workers in non-agricultural occupations (it was somewhat less than 10 million in 1928).*

Between 1928 and 1955, 32 million people have moved into non-agricultural occupations, and in the meantime over 14 million have moved into industry in the strictest sense. This is the major phenomenon to which practically all other features of the Soviet economy are related.

This phenomenon is to be regarded as having taken place in twenty-two years (excluding the years affected by the war). It implies a rate of increase in the number of industrial workers of 7 per cent per year (though in fact the process was most irregular). This, in a country where industrial productive assets were initially scarce, means that a prior demand upon the work of those already engaged in industry took the form of the building up of productive plant and equipment for the employment of the incoming flow of recruits. It is worthwhile to stress this point by means of a simple calculation. Assume that in order to employ any "new man," under conditions which would make the initial "value added" by his work equal to the previous average "value added," it is necessary to provide him with plant and

* It is moreover believed that the proportion of industrial workers in the non-agricultural labour force is a good deal higher in the U.S.S.R. than in the U.S. It is therefore believable that the industrial labour force of the Soviets has already caught up with that of the United States.

† DAVID REDDING: "Comparison of Volume and Distribution of Non Agricultural Employment in the U.S.S.R. 1928–1955 with the U.S. 1870–1952." *Review of Economics and Statistics*, November 1954.

* The 6th Five Year Plan proposes to bring up the working force in non-agricultural activities to 55 million by 1960.

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equipment which cost three times that of the "value added" expected from him (a modest estimate): in that case, the cost of so providing for seven "new men" per year must absorb 21 per cent of the "value added" by the hundred men then at work. If, in addition, one remembers that part of the work of the industrial labour force must be addressed to armaments, part to the improvement of their own equipment, etc., it is by no means surprising that only a minor fraction of their work should be directed to the procurement of consumer goods.

"Bourgeois" economists have a name for such a situation: a very high rate of investment dependent upon a very high rate of profits. "Marxist" economists have also a name for it, though not when the phenomenon occurs in a Communist country: a very high degree of "surplus labour," a very high degree of "exploitation of the worker."

"Value Added" and "the degree of exploitation"

It so happens that the concept of "value added," which has been much stressed by Western economists in the last generation, is also cardinal to the philosophy of Marx. Consider the workers (of all ranks) of any establishment. What can they be said to have produced during the year? This cannot be measured by the gross sales of the establishment, as the external costs (raw materials, etc.) and the upkeep of the plant and equipment must be deducted: what remains after this deduction is "the value added." It was the contention of Marx that the workers were entitled to all of this "value added" and were despoiled insofar as they obtained as wages only a part of it. The "degree of exploitation" was denoted by the proportional importance of that part of the "value added" which they did not obtain. And that which was denied to them went, in minor part to the consumption of capitalists, but in major part to "the accumulation of capital."

Marx looked forward to a state of affairs where this despoiling of the workers would cease; but he did not regard it as very imminent, because he was acutely conscious of the desirability of building up productive assets. This is what "the Capitalists" did and it was a necessity. A time would come, however, when the productive apparatus would have been so completed (a sort of "goal of economic history") that the hateful but historically necessary rôle of the Capitalists might and should and would come to an end.

Now let us consider a national economy where, for the sake of simplicity, all workers are wage or salary earners. What is the condition for the fulfilment of the condition of non-exploitation? It is that the wage bill should be equal to the total of the value added. But this will not prove possible if what is produced consists in large part of armaments, new equipment, etc. The larger the proportion of non-consumables, the larger must be the discrepancy between "value added" and the wage bill. This discrepancy is "profit" in the wider sense of the word. The rate of profit or the degree of exploitation are higher in Soviet Russia than in the Western countries. Personal consumption is estimated to be only 47 per cent of the national product in the U.S.S.R. as against 63 per cent in the U.S. This is a necessary outcome of the Russian urge to build up military power and industrial equipment; and the name of the régime is irrelevant to the facts.

The race and its consequences

It is hardly necessary for an understanding of the Soviet economy and of its problems to remember that it is "Communist": what is of decisive importance is that its fundamental intention is a very rapid building-up of industrial assets. Any country with the same programme, and the same concentration of political power, would present the same features.

At the time when the first Five Year Plan was being elaborated, one of its originators, L. Sabsovitch, estimated that it would need only fifteen years for the U.S.S.R. to overtake the economic level achieved by the U.S.A. Soon after this he reduced the period which he thought necessary, and asserted that it should be possible to "complete the whole

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period of transition by 1935–6, and to advance by that time far beyond the present level of production in the U.S.A. and probably also the level they will have reached by then, if they continue under a capitalist system." In the spring of 1955, however, there was a systematic campaign in the columns of *Pravda* to emphasise the backwardness of the Russian economy in comparison with the American. I do not mention this to detract from the Russian achievement but to illustrate the obsession of the Russian leaders: to compress into a much smaller period of time the economic progress of the U.S. This is not an illegitimate ambition; it was already the ambition of some ministers of the Czar and indeed it was common talk before the First World War among European economists that, if Russia kept up its then existing economic pace, it would overshadow all the rest of Europe by 1950.

But however legitimate these ambitions, they have very little to do with Communism. And they involve some severe consequences, which are violently denounced by anti-Communists and are strenuously denied by admirers of Communism in Western Europe. These consequences to which we shall point cannot honestly be denied—nor should they be attacked too severely if one subscribes to the end pursued.

The situation of the workers

THE material demands of the workers are for better food, better housing, a greater variety of industrial consumer goods and of services. These wants are weighted in different proportions, according to the workers' actual condition. At any given moment, their pressure for higher wages is in fact a pressure for more of these things and, as the managers of production give way to this pressure, this involves a reorientation of the national effort towards the production of these things as against others, such as armaments, and still others, such as dams, which may serve these wants only in the distant future.

If the rulers of a country are determined to give a high priority to the building up of assets of various kinds, they will tend to resist these demands. Addressing a very high proportion of the national effort to the building up of assets calls for strong political authority, and for a continuing complicity between the leaders of industry and the government.

It was Marx's view of England in the middle of the 19th century that the managers of industry obtained the full support of the government in resisting the claims of the workers (either for higher wages or shorter hours), and this allowed the Capitalists to make considerable profits and to accumulate capital at a high rate, building up productive assets. The law, the courts, and the police were on the side of the Capitalists. On the other hand, the position of the workers was very weak in itself and was further weakened by various institutions: it was very weak for, as against the workers already employed who claimed better conditions and rewards, there was a continuing inflow of new workers due to the natural increase of population and the outflow from the countryside, and these newcomers increased the supply of labour, thereby tending to depress the price which employers had to pay for it. On the other hand, the government helped the managers to interfere with efforts to organise the workers, and put its forces at their disposal to suppress any agitation.

This picture of a government siding unilaterally with the employers certainly does not suit the present conditions in Western capitalist countries. On the other hand, look at Soviet Russia. The political leaders want a high rate of capital accumulation: therefore they must logically be, in the productive establishments, on the side of the managers against the demands of the workers. A century ago our governments served the owners who wanted a high rate of capital accumulation; now, in Soviet Russia, the factory managers serve the State which wants a high rate of capital accumulation, and therefore its laws, its courts, its police, are aligned against the workers, to break their resistance to the demands of an ambitious production programme.

This is quite a logical attitude. A time may come, and perhaps it has even dawned, when

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a more liberal attitude to workers' organisations will be taken in Soviet Russia. There may be a mellowing, even as it occurred with us. But the recent past of Soviet history should not be regarded as the future of Western society, but rather as a repetition of our already distant past.

It was believed by Marx that Communism would flower in Britain which stood at the vanguard of Capitalism; writing later he would have thought of it as due to mature in the U.S. The political system of Communism would be much more gentle than that of Capitalism because the need to help the employers towards the accumulation of capital (in their name, but for the advancement of overall productivity) would have passed away. The best which can be made to explain the rigours of Communism is that it was enthroned in a country where the work of building up the productive assets had not been done: it is not, however, a watertight case since in Russia itself, before the First World War, the building-up was proceeding rapidly under a far milder régime.

A phase of Accumulation and a phase of Welfare?

IT SEEMS far too clear-cut to regard the Industrial Era as falling into two phases: first a process of Accumulation (entrusted by Marx to Capitalism), somehow working towards a completion which, once achieved, makes possible, and indeed necessary, a new phase of complete Distribution of the "value added" (this transition, having become possible and necessary, would require — according to Marx — the establishment of Communism). This pattern, however, can be accepted in relative terms, and then the American economy is to be fitted into the latter (Distribution) phase and the Russian into the former (Accumulation). If there were space, one might show how the workings of political democracy and trade unionism, availing themselves of the results of Capitalist Accumulation, have brought the present state of affairs in the U.S. much nearer to Marx's view of the (Communist) future than Russia stands today. Indeed it is interesting to point out that the catastrophic collapse of Capitalism foretold by Marx has not occurred, because the change-over which he envisioned as a once-for-all event has developed progressively over time. And it may well be that Capitalism has not collapsed, because a lot of things have been done which the Capitalists regarded as destructive.

But it is more germane to our subject to underline the attraction which the (Stalinist) policies followed in Soviet Russia must exercise upon the intelligentsia of the so-called "under-developed" countries (by which one means those poor in industry). If the élites of such countries are in a hurry, as they may legitimately be, to put their countries on the map as industrial powers, the system of institutions and practices of Soviet Russia may seem to them more suitable than the system of institutions and practices of Western countries. And here is a point which deserves to be stressed.

The two faces of Communism

IN THE advanced economies of the West, Communism relies for its appeal on the idea that it would demand less from the workers and give them more. Soft and bountiful, this is the face it turns to the West. But it is quite a different face which earns it the esteem of élites in under-developed countries —a stern face: it has a hard look and its urge is creative. What is called for is the building-up of productive assets; and this demands an increasing volume of work, increasingly turned to capital accumulation. In the form which they have taken by now, Western institutions are far less vigorous builders: they have lost their toughness and this loss is irretrievable. Far tougher is Stalinism, which moreover offers as a justification of its toughness that the solid wealth to be created will not belong to anyone in particular: an important emotional factor in under-developed countries where social inequality is most pronounced and corresponds least to services performed. It is, then, quite understandable that Communism should seem attractive to those who desire a rapid transformation of their countries, for much the

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same reasons which made untrammelled Capitalism seem desirable to a John Bright.

There is however a very weak point in Soviet economic growth, of which the Soviet leaders show themselves acutely conscious: and it is the difficulty they have encountered in supplying a rapidly increasing town population with agricultural deliveries increasing still more rapidly and obtained at lower cost. In the mere ten years of the two first Five Year Plans, non-agricultural employment in the Soviet Union rose from 10 million to 25 million, a rise which even in the U.S. took twenty-five years. But the rate of increase in non-agricultural employment was by no means followed by the stepping-up of agricultural deliveries. As a result, the price of food in towns went up very much more than nominal wages, and the real wage in towns fell very sharply. Using an index based on 1928, Miss Janet Chapman finds that the cost of food in 1937 had risen to 892 and the average money wage to 405; thus the average worker of 1937 must have worked more than twice the time required in 1928 to obtain the same fare—a text-book example of "absolute pauperisation." Such a situation—increasing masses of workers assembled in seats of industry at falling real wages—is the Marxian model for a revolutionary situation; and it seems highly plausible that "the Great Purge," which then intervened, was meant to strike terror in the hearts of those who might at that time have been moved against the régime.

That, however, is foreign to our subject. What is germane is that the continuing increase in the non-agricultural labour force required an increase in agricultural productivity which quite obviously has not been achieved. In 1951,* it was reckoned by Irving B. Kravis and Faith M. Williams that the Russian town worker had to work five and a half hours to buy a food package corresponding to an hour's wage of the American worker. The successive reductions in the time of rural labour required to produce given quantities of agricultural product have been a major, and often insufficiently underlined, factor in the progress of the standard of living in American towns. From 1910 to 1940, agricultural deliveries in the U.S. have been doubled in volume, with a rural labour force lessened by 40 per cent, and working a shorter day.

While Russia has sought to catch up with the volume of industrial production of the U.S., nothing has happened to date in Russia that indicates a rapid growth of agricultural production per head of land worker, and this difference is quite essential to the evolution of the standard of living. It is plain that, since 1953, the Russian economists have made this their chief preoccupation. The formidable extent of Russia's useful land area puts this country in the best natural conditions to emulate the American success in that respect. But what of China? This, then, seems to be the great social problem of Communist countries. While rapidly building up the volume of their industrial production, mainly through the increase in manpower, can they succeed in improving the average living conditions of these industrial or urban workers through gains in agricultural productivity?

Conclusion

COMPRESSED as it is, the present essay may perhaps go some way towards demonstrating that the economic and social phenomena and problems of the Soviet Union can be assembled into a coherent and meaningful pattern with recourse to a simple unifying concept: a government, stronger than any known in history, has assigned overriding importance to the attainment of defined and rapidly rising targets of industrial production.

* The figures relating to 1951 were published in the U.S. Monthly Labour Review, June 1952.

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Men and Ideas

Michael Hamburger: HEINRICH HEINE

"NO MAN thinks," says the lizard in one of Heine's early travel books, "only from time to time something occurs to people; these wholly unmerited flashes they call ideas, and the concatenation of these ideas they call thinking. . . . No man thinks, no philosopher thinks, neither Hegel nor Schelling thinks; as for their philosophy, it's mere air and water, like the clouds in the sky." A critic about to project his image of Heine has good reason to remember these words. Not only do they reveal the empiricism, the scepticism, and the flippancy which are authentic features of Heine's mind, but they contain a warning against the dangers of too literal an approach. To take Heine literally is to run the risk of grossly misrepresenting him.

One has only to consider the image—projected by Heine himself—which was the subject of Matthew Arnold's essay: "I know not if I deserve that a laurel-wreath should one day be placed on my coffin. Poetry, dearly as I have loved it, has always been to me but a divine plaything. I have never attached any great value to poetical fame, and I trouble myself very little whether people praise my verses or blame them. But lay on my coffin a sword; for I was a brave soldier in the war of liberation of humanity." To begin with, "brave" is a mistranslation of the German word "*brav*," which means "obedient," "reliable," or "good," in the sense in which we say that a child is good; and, contrary to Arnold's opinion, Heine was exceptionally brave, both morally and physically, but he was almost totally lacking in the humble virtues which he attributes to himself. The second falsehood in the original text is so blatant that Arnold's conscience compelled him to omit it from the translation; after "divine plaything," Heine has "or a consecrated means to heavenly ends." The third falsehood, Heine's pretence of indifference to literary fame, did not take in Arnold any more than the second, but he let it pass because "for his contemporaries, for us, for the Europe of the present century, he (Heine) is significant chiefly for the reasons which he himself in the words just quoted assigns." Heine's significance for Arnold's generation was indeed what Arnold claimed; but even the general tenor of Heine's self-characterisation conveys only a little fraction of the truth about his cultural rôle, as I shall attempt to show.

HEINE'S statements about himself are not always reliable; but the more one studies the works of 19th century writers who had ideas but no philosophy, the more one is prepared to find that it is not their self-characterisations, their confessions and professions, that reveal their vital preoccupations; not, at least, if taken literally and one by one. Rather, in an age of dialectics—of thesis, antithesis and, one hopes, of synthesis—it is their self-contradictions. This formula, too, is not generally valid; but it does apply to Heine and to a great many other writers whose minds were melting-pots for all the ill-assorted ideas thrown up by the age; in such cases one can be pretty sure that the issues that mattered most to them are those about which they were most apt to contradict themselves.

Heine made ample use of what Baudelaire called "the right to contradict oneself," but whereas Baudelaire worked hard for a synthesis, ideas in themselves mattered so little to Heine that he was content to let one idea cancel out another. He was prolific of ideas,

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but he did not respect his wealth. In the very worst sense of the word, he remained a "subjective" writer; not because he made use of the first person singular in his poetry and prose, but because he was more interested in the uniqueness of his person than in its efficiency as a medium. He never learnt that a great poet's "I" is a functional, as distinct from a biographical, "I"; that it is an instrument created by the poet for the sake of poetry. The "I" of Heine's poetry—and of his prose, from which it hardly differs—shows all the inconsistencies that are forced upon individuals by changing circumstances, moods, and necessities, and by their changing conceptions of their own personalities. That is why writers on Heine are so apt to produce distorted, simplified, and contradictory images, and why one feels tempted to shirk the labour of a synthesis which Heine himself was too easy-going, too self-indulgent to provide. It is only by balancing one of his statements against another, and balancing every one of them against the facts of his life and works, that one can hope to arrive at anything like the complex truth.

THE passage about the laurel-wreath and the sword comes from an early prose work of Heine's, the *Journey from Munich to Genoa*; and Heine's early ideas on politics are inseparable from his biography. "By the marching-route of my cradle," as he put it later, he was committed to the political Left, just as he was divided from the start between German sentiment and French *esprit*. His native Rhineland was pervaded by French influences. It was a French writer, Rousseau, who had emancipated his mother from Jewish orthodoxy, and another Frenchman, Napoleon, who had emancipated the Jews of the Rhineland from the ghettoes and—what was more important to Heine—from their confinement to the mercantile trades which he hated and despised. The defeat of Napoleon brought back the old restrictions when Heine was about to enter professional life. Debarred from working as a lawyer or civil servant, he was faced with the choice between a business career under the ægis of his rich uncle Salomon — which he tried and gave up before escaping to the comparative freedom of the universities—and that certificate of baptism which he described as "the ticket of admission to European culture." Heine never really solved this dilemma; he became a Lutheran but made malicious remarks about other distinguished converts not necessarily less sincere than himself, remained partly dependent on his uncle, whom he both admired and hated, and never worked as a lawyer or civil servant. Although he was able to earn his living—or part of it—by his pen, even the freedom of a writer was precarious in an age of strict censorship, frequent political upheavals, and conflicting literary factions.

By conviction, by disposition, and—one can almost say—by birth, Heine was a liberal. But liberalism did not exist in Germany; there were revolutionaries and reactionaries and very little in between. Heine's very first allegiance, that to Napoleon, involved an obvious contradiction; and though he remained faithful to Napoleon's memory—even to the extent of supporting the régime of "Napoléon le Petit"—his awareness of the contradiction forced him into the quibble that he was "not an unqualified Bonapartist: my allegiance is due not to the actions of the man, but only to his genius." A similar ambiguity attaches to Heine's later political associations with the "Young Germans," with the Saint-Simonists, and with Karl Marx; and though Heine had no aptitude for either abstract thought or practical politics, he had an almost infallible flair for the practical implications and potentialities of ideas.

Heine's allegiance to Napoleon also involved a conflict with the nationalistic factions, those "Teutomaniacs" against whom he waged a particularly intense campaign. This issue, again, was complicated by the connection between nationalism and the German Romantic movement and by Heine's genuine, though unconventional, patriotism. To the Romantic school he owed his introduction to German literature, the personal encouragement of his teacher A. W. von Schlegel, his interest in medieval literature, history, folk-lore, and even his love of the *Volkslied*, on which he modelled his own verse: and in spite of his Francophilia, even because of it, he never ceased to feel a very special love for the unawakened, "anonymous" Germany of his youth, a love made more poignant by absence in later years. When Bismarck chose to defend Heine against his anti-Semitic detractors, he did so on the grounds that "Heine was a writer of

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Lieder, second to none but Goethe, and the *Lied*, of all poetic *genres*, is the one most specifically German." This defence may seem more generous than just, now that Heine's lyrical poetry has been discredited for different reasons. Only a few staunch supporters still deny that his long courtship of the *Lied* was too gravely inhibited by Voltairian *esprit* and Byronic self-consciousness ever to result in an altogether happy marriage; but, curiously enough, the general public seems to have relished this peculiar tension between poem and poet. The enormous popular success of the *Buch der Lieder* continued long after Bismarck's time. It was not till 1926 that a highly fastidious and learned man of letters, Rudolf Borchardt, sounded the alarm by explaining why he found it necessary to reduce Heine's poems to "fragments" in order to include them in his anthology of the best German poetry.

HEINE's Romantic—or semi-Romantic—period is the earlier one of his studies at Bonn and Göttingen, his unrequited love for his two Hamburg cousins, his travels in Germany, Poland, Heligoland, England, and Italy. The political and social enthusiasms that are still associated with Heine's name belong to the same early period of his life; they reached their climax in the *Journey from Munich to Genoa*, published in 1828. Three years after the appearance of this book, Heine left Germany, attracted to Paris by the success of the 1830 Revolution. His connection with the "Young Germany" movement and with the Saint-Simonists, formed at that time, seems paradoxical when one considers his writings of the early Paris years; for already in the *Postscript* of 1833 to his first *Salon* volume he began to recant his republicanism. In Paris he had the opportunity to study revolutionary politics in action, with the result that he wrote in 1833: "It is my most sacred conviction that the Republican form would be unsuitable, unprofitable, and uncomfortable for the peoples of Europe, and nothing less than impossible for the Germans."

There were two principal causes for Heine's change of front. The first was his dislike of violent extremes, what I have called his liberalism. This he summed up very neatly in the same *Postscript* of 1833: "The man who does not go as far as his heart demands and his reason permits is a coward; the man who goes further than he wished to go is a slave." Above all, Heine feared the effect of revolutionary doctrines on Germany, for reasons which he made clear in his famous warning to the French to refrain from rousing the Germans from their philosophical meditations. This occurs in his *History of German Religion and Philosophy*, published in 1834. The Germans, he says, do not hate one another, as the French do, because of injured vanity, because of an epigram, say, or a visiting card not returned. "No, what we hate in our enemies is what is deepest in them, what is essential to them, the idea itself. . . . We Germans hate thoroughly, lastingly; since we are too honest, too clumsy also, to take our revenge by quick perfidy, we hate till our very last breath." The actual prophecy of Germany's awakening takes a form characteristic of Heine's sensitiveness to the potentialities of ideas; for he conjures up a vision of "Kantians who even in the world of phenomena will show no pity of any sort, but mercilessly, with sword and hatchet, will turn up the soil of European life to destroy the very last roots of the past." Then there are "armed Fichteans" who in their fanatical cult of the will, "can be tamed neither by fear or self-interest, since they live on the plane of spirit and defy matter"; and lastly the philosophers of Nature, who "will form an alliance with the chthonic powers of Nature, know how to invoke the dæmonic powers of ancient Germanic pantheism and revive that love of battle characteristic of the ancient Germans, which does not fight in order to destroy, nor in order to win, but only for the sake of fighting."

Heine alludes to the second factor in his conversion when he says in the same work that, as a poet and scholar, he himself "belongs to the sick old world." All his later works, from 1833 to his death in 1856, show the unresolved conflict between two radically different views of life. These he called "sensualism" and "spiritualism." On the one hand he continued to welcome every reform of existing institutions that promised more liberty to the individual; and he even wrote enthusiastically about material innovations like the railway. These were "progress," and they belonged to the order of "sensualism." On the other hand, he doubted the value of

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such improvements and feared the implications of the philosophy that made them possible; for, as he wrote as early as 1833, "the beginning and end of all things is in God."

Put in those terms, the antinomy sounds simple, familiar, and easy enough to resolve; it is the old conflict between religion and material progress. But Heine made countless subdivisions and subdistinctions that turn his own antinomy between "spiritualism" and "sensualism" into a war between treacherous and undisciplined factions, a civil war that could be neither won nor ended. For "sensualism" too was a religion and it conflicted with the other. The "spiritualistic" principle was that of Judaism and Christianity, which he called the "religion of pain." Opposed to it there was the religion of the heart and senses, the religion of the natural man; and Heine found examples of this "sensualistic" principle in primitive and exotic cults, in pantheism, gnosticism, alchemy, popular lore, and even in certain institutions of the Catholic Church. Where he went wrong was in believing—or rather hoping, for he was never sure enough to believe—that these examples supported his own religion of "light and laughter" which would supersede the religion of pain.

The optimism and hedonism of this pseudo-religion was a product of the Enlightenment, or rationalism, materialism, and Rousseau's sentimentalisation of Nature; it had very little to do with natural religions of any kind, for paganism and pantheism rest on a tragic sense of life. Hedonism can temper the observances of most religions, but it can never be a religion in itself. Because they knew only late antiquity, and misinterpreted what they knew of it, a great many 18th century writers came to believe in a paganism without tears, in a Greece and Rome exclusively devoted to the cultivation of beauty and the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. Yet Heine's ironic treatment of the Greek gods—the Greek goddesses were a different matter—in his early North Sea poems shows very clearly that he saw more than "light and laughter" in the ancient cults and myths. He had to look elsewhere for a tradition.

For a time he looked to the future and to such contemporary philosophies as that of Saint-Simon. In a poem of his early Paris years he announced the "Third Testament" that was about to replace the Two Testaments of the Bible, and the Church that would be built on this rock. The new God is a "God of Light"—one thinks of Goethe's paganism—but in the last line of the poem this God is said to be "present in our kisses," so that the whole poem is reduced to the level of a naughty joke. The pagan theme is elaborated in Heine's short novel of that period, *Aus dem Memoiren des Herrn von Schnabelowopski,* in which the old religion of pain is contrasted with the realisation—brought home to Heine by the paintings of Jan Steen—that "the Holy Spirit is manifested most gloriously in light and laughter." Yet the real hero of the novel is the feeble but plucky little Jew, Simson, who fights a duel "for the existence of God," that is, of the "spiritualistic" God of the Old Testament. This symbolic duel—clearly the model for that between Settembrini and Naphta in Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*—ends with the death of Simson who has only his faith and his anger to help him in his fight against a much stronger opponent, the good-humoured atheist Dirksen; but the pathos of his defeat is sharper than the irony by which Heine tries to deflect it.

With endless variations, Heine returned to this antimony between "sensualism" and "spiritualism." In the *History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany* he tries to show that "sensualism" is not identical with materialism, nor incompatible with "spiritualism." Once his "religion of joy" has been established, "body and soul will be at peace again and will interact in original harmony." Then again he considers the possibility that the "quarrel between them, instigated by Christianity" is "irreconcilable, mankind predestined to suffer unending misery, the peoples doomed for ever to be trodden down by despots," in which case it is to be hoped that Christianity will maintain its hold. Nietzsche was to develop this idea, and the criticism implied by Heine's earlier description of the Christian era as "a great period of sickness in the history of mankind"; but whereas Heine genuinely doubted the validity of his own substitute, Nietzsche would not rest till he had demolished the very foundations of the Christian "slave morality." Heine was never a modern Prometheus, only a half-hearted Prodigal Son.

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This helps to explain the blatant contradictions in the same work. Pantheism, "the secret religion of Germany," as Heine very aptly calls it, is "sensualistic," but not materialistic: yet Heine's praise of Spinoza leads him to assert that "the foremost aim of all our new institutions is the rehabilitation of matter, the restitution of its dignity, its moral acclamation, its religious sanctification, its reconciliation with the spirit." Luther is praised for being "an absolute man in whom spirit and matter were not divided"; but Luther turned against the "Indian-gnostic" element in Christianity, as upheld by the Catholic Church, and brought back the "Judaic-deistic" element, the same element which Heine blames elsewhere for the quarrel between spirit and matter.

Heine's own incurable materialism comes out when he claims that the Catholic Church was prudent enough to form "a concordat between God and the Devil, i.e. between spirit and matter, so that in theory the supremacy of spirit is acknowledged, but in practice matter is enabled to exercise all its annulled rights." Like all materialists, Heine could understand what is meant by the World and the Flesh, but not what is meant by the Devil. He therefore equates the Devil with the Flesh. Although he corrected this gross error in a subsequent treatise, the *Elementargeister*, it reappeared in his late ballet scenario, *Der Doktor Faust*, written in 1847 for Her Majesty's Theatre, London, but never, of course, performed there. This would be one of the most profound as well as one of the most imaginative of his works, if only he had not tried to improve on Goethe's *Faust*, and on the legend itself, by turning Mephistopheles into a female character, Mephistophela—thus perpetrating the same confusion between evil and sensuality. Mephistophela, it is true, assumes the power and the glory of a classical witch. But despite Heine's lip service to Astarte, Diana, and Venus Urania, their images even in his last works—from the splendid *Exile of the Gods* to the last love poems written when his body had almost dwindled away—are always obscured by that of a lesser goddess, Venus Pandemos.

To this goddess he remained loyal to his bitter end, throughout his eight years of physical disintegration in the "mattress grave." Yet he was right to pay a last visit to the Venus de Milo, as he claims to have done immediately before retiring to the mattress grave, and to take leave of her for good. He must have guessed that during those same years he might easily enter a final commitment to the "spiritualistic" religion that had transformed the ancient gods and goddesses into dæmons. He was only prevented from doing so by another antinomy, the rival claims on himself of Christianity and Judaism. In 1822, before his baptism, Heine had been active in the Berlin Society "for the Culture and Science of Judaism," a group of Jewish scholars who were trying to oppose the rising tide of anti-Semitism by promoting better understanding between Christians and Jews. After this early identification with the Jewish minority—but only with the liberal, emancipated part of it—Heine had tended to treat Judaism and Christianity as branches of the same "spiritualistic" religion. Now he was strongly drawn to Christianity by his own anguish of body and mind; for, as he wrote in his notebooks of those years, "in Christianity one arrives at a consciousness of the spirit through pain—illness spiritualises, as even animals show." Heine's wife Mathilde was a Roman Catholic and their marriage had been solemnised in a Roman Catholic church. As for Judaism, his attitude to it was complicated by an emotional ambivalence, as well as by his basic resistance to all spiritual religions.

His only early work with a specifically Jewish background and theme, *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*, remained a fragment; and even that fragment suffers from Heine's divided sympathy. Don Isaak speaks for Heine himself when he says to the Rabbi: "I love your cooking a great deal more than your faith, which lacks the right sauce. As for yourself, I have never been able to really stomach you. Even at your best times, even under the reign of my ancestor David, who reigned over Judah and Israel, I could not have endured to be one of you but should certainly have escaped one early morning from the Fortress of Zion and emigrated to Phoenicia, or to Babylon, where the love and joy of life effervesced in the temples of the gods." The myth of the Jews who are turned into dogs, but revert to their true shape on Sabbath day, in Heine's late poem *Die Prinzessin Sabbath* is also relevant to his feeling about the Jews; but by this time it was no

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longer his "sensualism" that kept him aloof. Apart from little Simson, the only other Jewish characters in Heine's early works are his crude, but lively, comic creations Gumpelino and Hyazinth of *Die Bäder von Lucca*. Here too, his emotional ambivalence takes the form of vulgar humour, as in his description of Gumpelino: "One could see by his nose that he came of a truly noble line, that he was descended from an ancient family into which God himself had once married without fear of *mésalliance*. Since then, it is true, this family has rather come down in the world, so that since Charlemagne it has had to earn its living mainly by dealing in old trousers and Hamburg lottery tickets, but without ever relinquishing the least part of its family pride or the hope of obtaining back its former property, if only the adequate compensation that is granted to emigrants, when their old legitimate sovereign keeps his promise of a restoration, a promise by which he has been leading them by the nose for the last two thousand years. Is that perhaps why their noses have grown so long? Or are these long noses a kind of uniform by which the Divine Monarch Jehovah recognises his old lifeguards, even when they have deserted? Gumpelino was such a deserter. . . ." But so was Heine, although the same family pride inhibited him from becoming as devout a Christian as Gumpelino. And there was that other difficulty, experienced even by the most ardent Jewish converts to Christianity, of responding emotionally to the message of the Redemption.

In his last years Heine took up the Bible again and resumed his studies in the history and literature of the Diaspora; these he had put aside together with *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*, for which they had served as a source. The *Hebraïsche Melodien*, the outcome of these renewed studies, are among the best of Heine's poems; but they are not quite good enough. Once again, it is the notebooks that tell us why. "The history of the modern Jews is tragic, and if one were to write about this tragedy one would be laughed at into the bargain.—That is the most tragic thing of all." Heine could not bear to be laughed at, nor could he keep his own feelings out of his jokes, but, to his dying day, half-hid his face behind a comic mask; and the mask is often that of a rather common clown. Even in reading his last poems one is embarrassed because Heine's own face keeps peering out of the mask, the face of a dying man too vain to be serious, mocking and blaspheming to keep self-pity in check. The *Hebraïsche Melodien* are the work of a master, but of a master strangely limited even in his range of verse forms, which hardly increased after his early experiments with free verse in the North Sea poems. *Bimini* is another late poem that is almost great; but, with less brilliance and profusion of detail, Baudelaire's version of it, *Le Voyage*, has a sombre grandeur which Heine never attained.

Another of the last poems, *Für die Mouche*, reformulates Heine's dilemma in rather different terms. Its "unending quarrel between truth and beauty" is a variant of the one between "spiritualism" and "sensualism," but a variant that calls for separate treatment.

. . . O dieser Streit wird enden nimmermehr,
Stets wird die Wahrheit hadern mit dem Schönen,
Stets wird geschieden sein der Menschheit Heer
In zwei Partein: Barbaren und Hellenen.

IF WE ask ourselves to which of these two parties Heine's work belongs, we come up against another contradiction. In order to understand it, we have to take up the development of Heine's political views at the point where I left it, the critical period of his early Paris years. For the conflict between "truth" and "beauty" is really one between two different conceptions of the function and nature of art.

"Aestheticism" and amorality in art are connected with the "sensualistic" principle, which Heine was not alone in glorifying; Yeats makes the connection when he writes that:

Labour is blossoming or dancing where
The body is not bruised to pleasure soul.

This was Heine's view also; but the see-saw motion of his mind—which, as I have tried to show very briefly, continued till his death—also caused him to express the view that "goodness is better than beauty"—the more rooted conviction of another post-Hegelian, Kierkegaard, with whom one does not expect Heine to agree about anything.

The question as to the nature and function

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of art appears early in Heine's writings. Already in the *Salon* of 1831—written before his friendship with Théophile Gautier who later propagated the doctrine of *l'art pour l'art*—Heine enquired into the relation of truth and beauty in art. Like most of his contemporaries he thought of "truth" as verisimilitude; but his conclusion that art is a symbolic process indicates the level on which truth and beauty cease to conflict: "Sounds and words," he wrote, "colours and shapes, sensuous phenomena of every kind, are only symbols of an idea, symbols that arise in the artist's mind when it is moved by the holy World Spirit; his works of art are only symbols by which he communicates his own ideas to other minds. The greatest artist is he who uses the fewest and least complex symbols to the utmost significance." Heine differs from recent æstheticians in positing a "holy World Spirit," but this is a borrowing from Hegel and there is a great deal of evidence that Heine did not believe in it. One of the *North Sea* poems contains an irreverent allusion to the sun as "a red, drunken nose, the nose of the World Spirit"; and, in another passage of the same *Salon* essay, this Spirit turns into something quite different, into "innate ideas" or, if we prefer, into Jungian archetypes. Heine writes: "In matters of art I am a supernaturalist. I believe that the artist cannot discover all his prototypes in nature, but that the most significant types, as innate symbols of innate ideas, are, as it were, revealed to him within his soul."

Yet in practice Heine's originality lay in his naturalism, his verisimilitude; he left it to his friends and followers in France, Gérard de Nerval, Gautier, and Baudelaire, to apply these theories and prepare the way for symbolist art. As Heine points out, all art is symbolic; what Heine failed to do in his poetry was to reduce his material to symbols of "the utmost significance." For he could not be a "supernaturalist" in art without believing in a supernatural order outside it. His honesty got in the way; and it is his honesty that caused the characteristic twist in his lyrical poems, a twist that wrings the neck of his muse. In poetry, if not in life, honesty is not enough; self-knowledge becomes valuable only at the point where the knowledge matters, but the self does not.

Heine got no further than those flashes of awareness that were his substitute for hard work. The more he saw of political writers like the Young Germans, Ludwig Börne and Karl Marx, the more the artist in him protested that these were his enemies. By 1840—when he published his vicious attack on Börne, an attack on a dead writer that could serve no other purpose than to ease his own emotional stress—he had decided once and for all that he was no soldier in any war of liberation: "For beauty and for genius there will be no place in the commonwealth of our new Puritans; both will be more grievously insulted and oppressed than under the older dispensations. . . . The kings are departing, and, in their train, the last poets."

BÖRNE'S accusation against Heine—for which Heine revenged himself by writing this book—had been that Heine had "talent but no character." When Heine's old enemies and former allies could no longer attack him on the grounds that he was a subversive writer, the same accusation became the basis of all their criticisms. Heine's defence was to place talent above character, to proclaim his freedom from any non-æsthetic consideration. Thus, in 1837, he interrupted his account of the French stage to profess his belief in the "autonomy of art"; claiming that "art should not serve as a handmaiden to either religion or politics, for its ultimate end is itself, as the world's own ultimate end is the world." This desperate simplification, with its appeal to a meaningless universe, was to serve as an apology for generations of later writers; its effect on Heine's own work can be studied in his two long poems of the forties, *Atta Troll* and *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*. The doctrine of the "autonomy of art," reformulated in the course of *Atta Troll* itself, meant that Heine could indulge all his personal whims, break off his narrative to aim a quick dart at individuals or institutions he disliked, and commit every manner of inconsequence: for his song, he writes, is "fantastically aimless; aimless like love, like life itself, like the Creator and His Creation, obedient only to its own pleasure."

It is with very mixed feelings that one reads the notebooks and the *Confessions* of Heine's last years. Politically, he had wholly disengaged himself from the "marching-route of his cradle"; but his professions of

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conservatism, even his professions of a return to the "spiritualistic" religion which undoubtedly attracted him at the time, would be more convincing if the cause had been less personal and if his last imaginative works did not refute them. Very few of his last poems show any evidence of the change of heart—and of the corresponding change of style—which one would expect from his notebooks and *Confessions*. The change—as already implied—was genuine, but not complete, and it arose from Heine's fear of a barbarism which he continued to foster even while trying to exorcise it.

In the notebooks Heine does his best to ward off the terrible visions of the future that followed his disillusionment with progressive creeds: "I see the marvels of the past quite clearly," one entry reads. "A veil covers the future, but a rose-coloured veil, and through it I glimpse golden pillars and ornaments, and hear sweet sounds." This is an attempt to cheer himself up with æsthetic fantasies, as the vocabulary makes all too clear; but its effect is cancelled out by one of his very last prophecies, revealing a very different aspect of what will happen when the "sensualistic" principle has triumphed: "The future smells of Russian hide, of blood, of godlessness and a great many cudgels. I advise our grandsons to be born with a very thick skin to their backs." This prophecy occurs in Heine's last public prose work, *Lutezia*. His *Confessions* of 1854 fill in the biographical background. He had seen socialism turn into Communism, republicanism into a despotic barbarism which he came to hate and fear more than he had ever hated or feared the old tyrannies. His own denunciations of these creeds, he honestly admits, were inspired by an intuitive antipathy towards their advocates rather than by abstract principle. His revolt was æsthetic before it became ethical, for he did not turn against atheism until it ceased to become the prerogative of a cultured minority and "began to reek very strongly of cheese, brandy, and tobacco: then suddenly my eyes were opened, and what I had not grasped by my intellect, I perceived through my sense of smell." His personal association with revolutionaries of every shade had taught him to beware of the "fanatical monks of atheism, Grand Inquisitors of unbelief, who would condemn M. de Voltaire to the stake because at heart he was nothing but an obdurate deist." This intolerant materialism, the product of an alliance between atheism and Communism, threatened to destroy "our whole modern civilisation, the hard-won achievements of so many centuries, the fruit of the noblest endeavours of our predecessors." The same threat accounts for his gloomy jottings in the notebooks about the future of poetry.

"Democratic hatred of poetry," he notes. "Parnassus is to be levelled down, macadamised, and where once the leisured poet had climbed, listening to nightingales, there will soon be a flat road, a railway, where a boiler neighs as it rushes past busy pedestrians." And again: "Democratic rage against love poetry.—Why sing about roses, you aristocrat! Sing of the democratic potato, which keeps the people alive." Most ironic of all is his epitaph for poetry, an epitaph most elegantly and fittingly inscribed—but for his own grave: "Our lyrical poetry is a product of spiritualism, although its material is sensualistic, the longing of the isolated mind to be merged with the world of phenomena, to mingle with nature. As sensualism triumphs, lyrical poetry must end, for there arises a longing for the spiritual: sentimentality, which grows ever thinner and fainter, nihilistic mawkishness, a hollow fog of verbiage, a half-way house between has-been and will-be, tendentious poetry." Many years earlier Heine had observed that "sentimentality is a product of materialism"; and it was Baudelaire who turned the definition against Heine's own work, when he called it "*une littérature pourrie de sentimentalisme matérialiste*." Heine had never lacked self-knowledge, only the power to act on it. Already in 1834 he had written about "romantic extravagance," due to the predominance of "individuality and scepticism"; and as early as 1829 he had defended himself against the charge of "Byronic dividedness"—by blaming the world: "Oh, dear reader, if you feel like complaining about that 'dividedness,' you should rather complain that the world itself has been torn neatly in half. For since the poet's heart is the centre of the world, it follows that it must now be grievously divided. Whoever claims that his heart has remained whole is only confessing that he has a prosaic, remotely provincial, small-town heart. But through mine the great rift of the world has passed, and for that very reason I know that the mighty gods have granted me high favour

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above many others and thought me worthy of the martyrdom of poets."

THIS is Heine the *charmant esprit*, as Baudelaire called him elsewhere, on whom one does not like to be too hard; the writer who, as Professor Barker Fairley remarks in his recent study of Heine's imagery, "had hardly a dull page." Perhaps one should not ask for more than that, though personally I wish that Heine had written a few more dull pages of prose and a few more poems that speak through a single mask, and that mask firmly fixed. The irony and facetiousness of his manner, though rarely dull, are often exasperating. They were imposed on Heine by an early necessity which turned into second nature, as he himself suggests in a passage on Goethe: "Those writers who languish under censureship and intellectual restrictions of every kind, and are yet incapable of ever disowning the true convictions of their hearts, are quite especially apt to resort to the ironic or humorous form."

When Heine died in Paris on February 17th, 1856, his reputation was higher in France than in Germany, though parts of his early *Buch der Lieder* were familiar to a vast body of Germans, educated and uneducated alike, if only because they had been set to music popular to the point of anonymity. During the following decades his fame spread to every European country, to the United States and as far as Japan. By an exclusive emphasis on his "modernity"—that is on his liberalism, his materialism, and his irreverence—a vast 19th century public were able to turn Heine into one of the heroes of their time. This modernity itself was only skin-deep, as one can see from Heine's failure to make good poetry out of the large city in which he spent most of his mature life; but Heine's journalistic prose, unexcelled in his time, was truly modern, for it had grappled with almost every important issue of the century. Much of his prose remains as stimulating as it was to all the contemporaries and near-contemporaries who tried to imitate its verve, its wit, and its clarity; and the same qualities keep most of his poetry readable still—which is more than one can say for a great many talented poets who were writing during the same transitional period, the period when a moribund Romanticism was gradually giving way to Symbolism on the one hand, Naturalism on the other.

In order to overcome the limitations of that period and of his own position in it, Heine would have needed either genius or humility. Both genius and humility are destroyers of circumstance. His younger contemporary, Eduard Mörike, a late successor to that "provincial" Suabian school which Heine never tired of ridiculing, proved that even the older tradition of German lyrical verse was still capable of a new and genuine development; but Mörike's way was closed to Heine, for such local roots as Heine had were cut away in his youth. This uprootedness became another ingredient in his sentimentality. To be cosmopolitan is not necessarily to be universal; but Heine's cosmopolitanism could have opened a way which he did not take, a way more vertical than horizontal that leads to universality, since all roots reach down towards the same centre. He could have grown deeper roots and become one of the "transplanted" writers whom Rémy de Gourmont distinguishes from the "uprooted." A still younger contemporary, Georg Büchner, proved what genius could do in the way of innovation; but Büchner had all the ruthlessness of genius, and Heine feared nothing more than to be possessed. That was his dilemma, the dilemma of liberalism in an age of extremes; and he faced it with insight, honesty, and the desperate courage that will not admit defeat.

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NOTES FROM A DIARY

An inquiry into beauty?

Beauty is a word that has largely dropped out of use. It is employed today as knowing clannish jargon, in the way technicians talk: "a beautiful job": picture, poem, or jet turbine engine that is "a beauty."

Although fortunes have been spent inquiring into people's sexual habits, how they spend their money, whom they vote for, what they think about their leaders, etc., no one seems to know whether they require beauty in their surroundings nor what enhancing or depressing rôle the beautiful and the ugly play in their lives.

The fact that little seems to be known about all this, makes every endeavour to construct beautiful cities seem a theoretical or dogmatic attempt on the part of people who care, to impose their tastes on those who don't care. When planners and—even—politicians talk about the beauty of new cities, one feels that they may have æsthetic values of their own but they never seem to be addressing themselves to known human needs. All discussions today about rebuilding London seem to fall between fanatical purists, well-intentioned philistines, and senile academic hypocrites. The one thing no one seems convinced of today is that beauty is *necessary*. And since we live in the age of necessity in public affairs, beauty, as a public cause, might as well be abandoned. Perhaps that is why we are ashamed to speak of it.

Yet I am convinced that to write of people being starved of beauty is not just a figure of speech. I think it could be proved that they are starved. The reason why it might even be a worthwhile subject of inquiry is that until this is demonstrated no one will believe it.

Architecture is Landscape

Here, by beauty, I do not mean conscious appreciation of the arts but an immediate enhancement of being which people may or may not get (I think they do sometimes get it) from living in beautiful surroundings.

The difference between conscious æsthetic awareness and such immediate satisfaction of an appetite can be indicated like this. A man who goes into a gallery and looks at a picture—say the *Tempesta* of Giorgione—of another man who is living in very beautiful surroundings, is still outside the world conveyed in the picture. A man who lives in a beautiful city or landscape is a man inside a beautiful picture. This is both an æsthetic and a natural state in which to be. The difference between architecture and the other arts is that architecture is, after all, a form of landscape gardening, and to live in a garden is a different thing from either going to a public art gallery or living in a back yard. Architecture, however rococo, remains the most innocent of the arts, always creating a natural surrounding for its inhabitants. Myths, from the Garden of Eden to that of the late 18th century of the innocent savage, recognise that to live amidst beauty (as apart from going to look at art) is a primary instinctual satisfaction. Without this satisfaction, we are maimed.

Most people agree that blindness is almost the greatest misfortune that can befall any one. The strongest argument for thinking so is that it cuts him off from the beauty of the visible world. When one thinks about the blind one does not wonder how they get about but what visual compensations they develop.

If we live in irremediably ugly surroundings we are living in what is a mockery of vision, a kind of enforced parody of blindness. That this is so, seems acknowledged by the passion of modern town-dwellers to get away from their towns. Tourism is not just "modern restlessness." It is the result of a very understandable wish to satisfy a visual instinct that has been repressed. We are told that French and Italians who live in beautiful cities are not great travellers. Whether this is true or not, we readily believe it. There would be no passionate need to move if we were not starved of things to enjoy with our eyes.

The appetite for beauty

In the mouth of an æsthete, the phrase "I simply live for beauty" sounds insincere, though it may be truer than he himself realises. The fact surely is that a great many people do live more for beauty than for "personal relations" or for anything else. My statistical inquirers here would try to find out how many people think all the year round of their Italian holiday and what proportion of their savings they spend on this.

For such people, beauty must be the one entirely reliable source of pleasure in their lives which does not let them down or betray them, which, if they

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are able to experience and then memorise it, is a treasure no government, husband, wife, or tax-collector can take away.

For Italians who live in a beautiful city (I have noticed in Verona) the fact that the city stays there, is outside them, is not subject to their whims, cannot be disregarded—and yet can be entered into, can receive them into its outsideness, thus enhancing their inner life with *its* outer life—all this provides them with an increasing satisfaction. All other satisfactions are spasmodic, and often disappointing. Beauty is the only appetite that can be permanently satisfied.

When we cover the countryside with hundreds of thousands of houses which offer no satisfaction to this instinct, we are producing a repression which is similar to that of the sexual instinct. It is inevitable that people living in the "subtopias" should want television sets that show them somewhere else, automobiles that get them away from the streets in which they live, more and more holidays. But these things are only added frustrations, because they are of their nature so fleeting. Nothing really makes up for the satisfaction which is cut off at the root of life by hideous surroundings.

So the prevalent idea that in building our cities, there are "needs" which have to be satisfied (which may, after other things have been dealt with, include "culture" piped down from "specialised agencies") is as repressive to an instinctive natural condition, as the Victorian attitude towards sex.

A Visit to Jamini Roy at Calcutta

His whole house is a shrine devoted to his paintings. The paintings are not hung, they are placed, on the floor, and on shelves. The walls are completely white, and the furniture consists of rectangular box-shaped seats.

Each room represents a different phase of his work. In the earlier rooms, there are some conventional studies, and even exercises in the manner of the French impressionists. But the European manner is alien to him. Instead, he has tried to assimilate Christian symbolism into Hindu mythology, in a style based on village art. The most recent paintings, in very broken colours, are of a goddess, and of a crucifixion, painted in earth colours, on palm-leaf matting.

Jamini Roy is 66, with white hair, a rather pale complexion, a lined, yet almost boyish, acolyte's face. Here he is amongst his "things" which he shows you joyously. His English is monosyllabic but it conveys subtleties, as well as essentials. All his life he has been painting the metamorphosis of myth into myth. With his brush he has gently tried to develop the Christian myth (there are here the Last Supper and the Flight into Egypt as well as the Crucifixion) towards Eastern ones.

I noticed a recent painting of a man in a loin-cloth seated cross-legged on the ground. "Is that Gandhi?" I asked. He smiled: "It might become that." I said: "If it were not for photographs which have fixed too much the literal appearance of Gandhi in our minds, he would perhaps be your painting." "I try to paint the essentials, and naturalism has nothing to do with these.

"Living in this time, I disagree." Several times he repeated the phrase, "I disagree." He disagreed most of all with the tendencies of other Indian painters. Showing me some recent paintings of a horse, cows, and calves, a cat with a lobster in its mouth, he said: "Now that I am an old man, and because I disagree, I go back to painting like a child. I have learned to paint again from my five-year-old grandson." He showed me a very Indian-looking study of Shiva by his grandson. "I am very alone," he said. "Other painters want to introduce European ideas into their painting. I want to paint India."

Postscript on an important book

Richard Lannoy's photographs in *India* (Thames and Hudson, 42s.) do not just display—as so often happens with modern photography—Mr. Lannoy's skill. They are the real India—a scene in which every extreme of life and death, wealth and poverty, beauty and ugliness, seems always to be on show at every moment. Mr. Lannoy's India is a theatre with scenery, costumes, temples, interiors—and, above all, the players. It extends from the north to the extreme south. It never shrinks, and is extremely lively—and, one might add, deathly. It is at once beautiful, calm, agitated and terrifying. These are, in their way, the best photographs I have seen.

Stephen Spender

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Discussion

Troubled Dialogue

If Mr. Beloff's arguments on under-developed countries [February Encounter] are valid, one may well wonder why any Western nation should at all agree to help the industrially backward countries of Asia and Africa with capital and technicians, unless these countries commit themselves in advance to be militarily/politically on the side of NorthAtlantica. As regards private capital, why should Western countries "risk more Abadans"? As to financial aid on an inter-governmental basis, or channelled through international institutions, "this depends on the willingness of the taxpayers of North-Atlantica to accept this as a continuing burden," and why should they accept such a burden unless there are tangible gains, or "considerations of interest," to justify this course? As to technical aid, why should a Western expert, "with many opportunities of employment nearer home, seek it in a strange climate and alien atmosphere if he has neither the impulse of imperial service, nor the lure of a larger personal income"?

To withhold Western aid from the "under-developed" countries is to increase the chances that a large part of the world, as yet uncommitted, would turn towards Communism. To this argument, Mr. Beloff's reply is two-fold. First, the argument assumes that "poverty equals Communism," but this equation is "by no means self-evident." Secondly, the "under-developed" countries, in embracing Communism, stand to lose national freedom, "which is what they presumably care about most." Western aid or no aid, it would be always against the best interests of the "under-developed" countries to fall for Communism.

Mr. Beloff's contention calls for critical scrutiny.

"One of the characteristics of a healthy social order is a rate of economic growth not too hopelessly out of accord with the expectations of the more active and more vocal parts of the population," he writes, and other things being equal, a healthy social order is more resistant to Communist infiltration. Now, in recent decades, there has occurred a substantial change in the state of expectations in the "under-developed" countries with regard to future economic development. On the one hand, these countries have been brought into increasingly closer contact with the industrially advanced countries of the West, with the result that leaders of public opinion in the poorer countries have started feeling, with an intensity unknown before, the contrast between their own standards of living and the much higher standards prevailing in the West. Moreover, the spectacularly rapid industrialisation of the U.S.S.R. and Japan has persuaded many that the gap between the West and the industrially backward countries can be closed much more swiftly than was once supposed possible.

Mr. Beloff denounces in Asian countries "a certain inferiority complex which often manifests itself by lofty claims to cultural or even moral superiority as against the West". I am inclined to agree. There can be little doubt that the claims to cultural superiority made by many Asians represent, partly, a pathetic attempt to seek an illusory consolation for what Asia lacks in the material sphere. (One might, at the same time, add that the West, in the last few centuries, owing to a combination of historical circumstances into which one need not enter here, does seem to have lost to some extent certain qualities of consciousness which can broadly be described as "spiritual": to restore some of these qualities, though on a different plane, would be, one supposes, one of her more creative endeavours in the coming decades.) But the very fact that such unreal compensation should be so insistently sought indicates the intensity, and the bitterness, with which many Asians feel the inferiority of their material situation.

Behind all these protestations of spiritual superiority, there lies, imperfectly concealed, an

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appetite for material progress. In the economically backward countries of the world, powerful minorities of (mostly urban) people are in the process of emerging who consider rapid industrial progress as an objective of such overwhelming importance that almost no price is too high for it. These people represent in an intensified form the new mood that is gaining ground in the traditionally "sluggish East." Every age has its characteristic religion. The zeal for industrial development, for "technical" progress, may well become the religion of the under-developed countries in the near future.

I WANT to make my personal position perfectly clear at this stage. I do not think that a low stationary standard of living—such as that of peasants in some cases—is generally a source of great unhappiness, unless it is thrown into sharp contrast with a substantially higher standard of living, which is at the same time considered attainable. On the other hand, a falling standard of living, from whatever previous level, is always acutely painful, and a rising standard of living moderately pleasant, unless this rise is obtained through sacrifices which more than offset the potential happiness. In many under-developed areas, a certain rate of economic development is necessary even in order to arrest a steady decline in the general standard of living consequent on growth of population. Over and above that, every effort should be made to close the gap between these countries and the more advanced Western countries, short of recourse to those extreme methods which result in the construction of industrial monuments at an enormous cost in human suffering. A certain dose of "materialism" will do good to the Eastern countries. But there is a difference between that gentle materialism which is the enemy of superstition and an ally of reason, and the unrestrained materialist cult which, treating human beings as part and product of the material environment, and measuring progress by the sole criterion of power to control the environment, points the way to totalitarian control over society, and degenerates into a kind of intoxication with organised physical power.

Will the industrially backward countries of the world pass through the coming "materialist" phase of their history without developing some form of totalitarianism and without getting involved in fruitless conflicts of intolerant creeds? Our new converts to technocracy are not propagandists for dictatorship as such. The under-developed countries are not entering the new phase in their history already committed to a philosophy of fanaticism, like Russia after the Revolution. But if democracy seems incompatible with rapid economic development, they may not resist long the lure of dictatorship. Much will depend, no doubt, on the qualities of the individuals who guide the destinies of the peoples of these countries, and of others who, in less spectacular ways, influence the climate in which history makes itself. But something will depend on outside factors, including the attitude of the West. In the case of Russia, the attitude of the West in the post-Revolutionary years was conducive to the intensification of intolerance. In the case of the industrially backward countries of today, history remains to be written.

If these countries lose faith in democracy, it is not difficult to see that many of them will be powerfully attracted by the Communist type of dictatorship. The alternative of a priest-ridden autocracy is out of tune with the current zeal for material progress. It is no use retorting that in choosing Communism, these countries will lose their national freedom. Reality presents a different face to those whom circumstances have drawn towards Communism. Even though many of them will be disillusioned later, it will then be too late. And the fact that these people have deceived themselves will be poor consolation to sincere democrats.

There is also the other possibility that a new brand of Communism—the Asian brand of Titoism—will be the distinctive product of the environment that presents itself in many under-developed countries today. Not every one is equally convinced with Mr. Beloff that "China is rapidly disproving the claims advanced as to the possibility of separate forms of development within the overall Soviet pattern." But even under this new form, there will not be very much for democrats to rejoice in.

"THE record of Western imperialism can hardly yet be judged, as future historians may be able to judge it." This may be true; yet people on both sides will judge, and their actions will be influenced by their imperfect judgments. At the turn of the last century, when the Japanese Government initiated a vigorous programme of industrial development, British colonies in Asia and elsewhere remained in a more or less stagnant state, thanks to the British colonial policy of *laisser-faire* and free trade. It is at least understandable if some of the colonial countries, and countries which have recently emerged from dependent status, have a feeling that with free governments they could have forced their way out of economic stagnation much earlier. There are also psychological factors, including that "inferiority complex" that imperialism breeds in the colonies, which, in varying degrees, affect Asian attitude towards the West. Whether or not such an attitude is correct—and bitterness and suspicion are

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undoubtedly unfortunate, and ought to be combatted—it exists. It forms, for the moment, part of the historical situation in which decisions are to be taken.

One third of the total population of the world is under Communism today; one third is on the side of the Western democracies; and the remaining third is composed either of colonies, or of countries recently emerged from a colonial status, whose thoughts are greatly dominated by colonial problems, and who are instinctively drawn towards a "neutralist" position. If the Western countries find in such a neutralist attitude justification for refusing to aid the "under-developed" countries, if they decide, as Mr. Beloff insists they should, that these countries could be offered assistance in raising their standards of living only when they accept to enter that "community of obligations which increasingly governs the internal arrangements of Western societies," what will be the result? Let us be clear in our minds. The West can no longer block indefinitely the economic development of the "under-developed" countries; but it can influence the form that this development will take. With aid from abroad—even if this aid is not wholly obtained from the West—the strain imposed on the industrially weaker countries may not be too great to be incompatible with democracy. On the other hand, if Western assistance is unavailable, some of these countries will either lean heavily on Soviet aid, or, in an effort to raise the necessary resources internally, strain themselves to a point where democracy is exceptionally difficult to maintain. Not only that; the political atmosphere in which the new economic experiment is made will so change as to dim the chances of democracy. That will be unfortunate, above all for democrats in the under-developed countries, but also for those abroad who cherish freedom.

One thing, however, is certain. If the Western countries cannot but feel as Mr. Beloff does, it is better that they do not help. It is no use offering aid, and then feel bitter over the "ingratitude" of the under-developed countries. But is this feeling inevitable, when things are viewed in a larger context? "For NorthAtlantica the threat to freedom is almost wholly today the threat from the Soviet world." It is, indeed, the cardinal error of Mr. Beloff's entire argument that he interprets this threat within too narrow a frame, and bases his policy suggestions on this restricted interpretation. The future of freedom depends as much on legitimate defence against possible aggression as on a policy of co-operation designed to influence, in favour of democracy, the long-term trends of history. The Russian leaders, in choosing to remind independent Burma that the West till recently had been "sitting on her neck", gave evidence of their fear that the policy of the newly independent states was not sufficiently inspired by hatred, and that the Russian version of world co-existence excluded the idea of world-wide co-operation. Mr. Beloff, in proposing that Western assistance should be offered to these States on conditions that are known to be unacceptable to most of them, shows once more how the extremes meet.

AMLAN DATTA

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"We Dream of Motor-Cars"

SINCE I am one of the two writers on automotive styling whom Mr. Forge cited by name in his article (January ENCOUNTER), may I be permitted to comment on it.

First, may I congratulate him on a smooth piece of prose-styling. In a more green-eyed age, this article might have enabled him to do a Roger Fry on Borax, and reduce yet another living art to the dead and innocuous categories of Bloomsbury intellectualism. But I don't think that he can be allowed to get away with such a technique simply because it is time-honoured and efficiently done, and I would like to summarise the objections to his viewpoint briefly, if bluntly, under the following heads.

1. *European prejudice.* Of course one doesn't judge European cars by the standards of American styling, any more than one judges "Empire sparkling-type" by the standards of champagne, or St. Ives abstractionists by the standards of Paris. The fact is that all European styling since the war that isn't deliberately antiquarian has been a second-hand, and usually second-rate, provincial variation on themes from Detroit. Even the Italian line—so much admired by snob-critics today—was denounced by snob-critics for its Americanisms when it first appeared in the late forties. As to relative rates of expendability (obsolescence) as between the American and European car-markets, the latest figures seem to suggest that they are the same on both sides of the Atlantic. Certainly the average *first* re-sale period is the same, at five to six years, while the average useful life of American cars is still rising and now stands at about fourteen and a half years. Comparable vital statistics are not available for the total life of European cars, but don't (on a random sampling of the cars seen in Putney High Street) appear to be much different.

2. *Coyness.* The comparison between a Cadillac dream-car and Joan Crawford was a masterpiece of ineptitude. There is more than

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sufficient iconographical evidence, and I know that Mr. Forge is aware of it, to show that the strict comparisons are with Jane Russell and Powers Agency models—styling jobs all. Mr. Forge's suppression of this fact seems allied to his determination to keep sex out of the discussion. But what would any normally-hormoned consumer think on seeing the bumper-bombs of the Cadillac with their white rubber nipples? Not for nothing are these known as Dagmars. (Dagmar: U.S. television star by whose standards Sabrina is not to be judged.) The relationship between automobile styling and sex is probably the biggest industrial design problem currently awaiting solution.

3. *Ignorance coupled with lack of Sensibility.* This is nicely epitomised by the intrusive "r" in Mr. Forge's spelling of *La Espada* (he can't spell my name either, but I don't hold that against him). If he was really sufficiently *au fait* with American practice to be able to dismiss it in the way he attempts, he would know that a number of dream-cars have been named after *swords* (*le Sabre*, *Excalibur*, *Cutlass*), and the spelling *Esparda* would have appeared ridiculous to him as soon as he had written it.

4. *Gullibility.* General Motors say—in public—that their dream-cars are intended to *test* public opinion, but their most important function is to shape it. It takes five years to design, tool-up, and deliver a new production-model to the dealers, but a dream-car can be off the drawing-board and on the road in twelve months. Thus the dream-cars of 1955 exhibit styling features that G.M. were already committed to in 1951 for 1956 models. Their function is thus to force public taste into prefabricated channels—something that, obviously, one doesn't tell the consumers.

Under this same heading one should note also Mr. Forge's careful refusal to be sucked-in by *La Espada*: ". . . we knew that the car had not been anywhere . . . was brand new." In fact, this vehicle abounded in tell-tales of use—not only the "authentic crackle" of the leather, but also the scuffing of the floor-mats, rubbed quality of external chrome, scrapes and scratches on the wheel-hubs, etc. If Mr. Forge was deluded by the fact that the mileage recorder had been wound back to zero, then he is the ultimate mug of whom Warren Street has dreamed for years. G.M. dream-cars turn in a tidy mileage on demonstration runs normally, and as personal transport of the design staff.

5. *Unchecked Hearsay.* Mr. Forge repeats two well-worn old wives' tales that have been the stock-in-trade of snob refusals to take popular industrial design seriously ever since the war—that the stylist has no real relationship to the engineering design team, and that the "American car remains intact underneath." (Though he gives the latter a new twist.) The relationship of styling and engineering is basic and fundamental, and numerous design-histories exist in print which show the different ways in which this relationship is worked out. Styling changes either signalise engineering changes, or—as with the wrap-round screen—precipitate them. The American car does not remain intact underneath; the *Continental* could not have been draped over the 1956 norm for U.S. chassis design, and the mechanical redesign required to make *Continental* out of *Lincoln* is precisely as radical as the styling changes, no more, no less. As for "Borax in reverse"—phooey! Borax for a different market, Borax for the Ivy League.

6. *Methodological Muddle.* Mr. Forge's observations on the Bristol 405 will serve to epitomise this. "Knowledge of its performance will never make [it] a good-looker," he says, thus knocking the whole concept of representational design sideways. If this long word for styling (*Design as Symbol* is the customary long-hair circumlocution) means anything, it means that the known performance of a machine adds prestige to its forms, otherwise why ape the forms of other cars, jet-planes, interplanetary vehicles? Knowledge of the Bristol's performance and particularly its price, has already made the 405 beautiful in the eyes of large sections of the automobile-fancying public. It has also always been one of the most carefully snob-styled of English motor-cars, justifying the price-differential of nearly four-to-one between itself and comparable popular vehicles, by a foreign-looking exterior—the 405 is heavily thumb-printed with the characteristic manner of Umberto Scaglioni of Turin.

In fact, Mr. Forge is merely airing a personal opinion about the Bristol, and that is about all he has done across the whole field of automotive styling. In the case of a vehicle so heavily loaded with emotional and social values this is dangerous frivolity. In the middle of the technological century the motor-car is the average citizen's toe-hold on the wonders of technology, and by knowing the motor-car we come to know ourselves. It is too important a field to admit of æsthetic dilettantism, which is one of the reasons why I personally had intended to say nothing further about it until I commanded much more information, both historical and social. But Mr. Forge appears to be even more ignorant than I am, and it would be a great pity if the average English Intellectual, chronically under-informed on all technical matters, should be allowed to believe that he speaks with some kind of authority.

REYNER BANHAM

Putney, S.W.15

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[Mr. Forge replies:

Mr. Banham and I have, I think, few opinions in common. However, I am as frightened as he is at the thought that I should be taken by the average English Intellectual as an authority on motor-cars. Our difference is epitomised in the fact that I do not see a subject as immediate as the day-to-day excitement that I, and I believe others, get from watching motor-cars as a "problem" that waits upon historical and social data for its "solution," but rather as a living experience infinitely worth description and discussion. We differ, in fact, about what we call "dead and innocuous categories."

Mr. Banham's pro-American ulcers are indeed inflamed; I do not think that an unprejudiced reader would have taken my attitude to Borax as unsympathetic, but the reverse. However, being European, I am interested in a quality which seems to me valuable in European cars, and that is neither reactionary nor derivative—this was what I tried to describe. There is no label for what I mean and this may have made it hard for Mr. Banham to follow my point. The expendability question is not merely a matter of figures, as Mr. Banham very well knows. "Don't think I am going to be swayed by proof" as the woman in the cartoon says, at least not when it's as thin as that.

The comparison I made was not between the dream-car and Joan Crawford but between the way it was photographed and the way she was. As far as I know, Jane Russell is not usually shown in a way that makes her femininity look remote. Mr. Banham has himself covered, with erudition, the sex angle; I hope that I do not appear to be defending my hormones when I say that I felt that there were other aspects of the motor-car subject that were worth talking about.

I wish that I could accept his implied compliment to my knowledge of Spanish. As I cannot, his rather complicated accusations miss their target: I misspelt the name of the dream-car (and I am sorry I got his name wrong); I *did* know about Cutlass, etc.; I did *not* attempt to dismiss U.S. practice; I like Hollywood.

". . . had not been anywhere, done anything . . ." referred to going places and doing things of a slightly different order from motoring about on arterial roads. My impression was that the car was intended to call such things to mind—but my hormones or my European prejudice or something may have misled me. As to the mileometer, I would like to be able to say that I read it but I didn't.

The frontier between the domain of the stylist and the engineer needs, in the proper place, more careful definition than either of us have given it. The purpose of my footnote was to emphasise the relative autonomy of styling. I realise that Mr. Banham did not follow what I meant by "an idea of what a car is . . ."; I would be interested if he would look at the specifications of the *Continental* and compare them with, say, the Plymouth *Belvedere* and tell me how the difference between the two matches up with the difference between their appearance.

Mr. Banham's remarks under the heading of "Methodological Muddle" are so irresistibly reminiscent of Dr. Edith Summerskill on the subject of cheese that I find it hard to attempt to answer them. He has made it plain that he did not know what I was talking about—I accept the fact and believe it was for reasons other than my failure to use the customary "long-hair circumlocutions" or to play according to the rules that go with them.]

Democracy v. Liberty?

In Mr. Peregrine Worsthorne's lengthy article, "Democracy v. Liberty?" (January), there is not a single example, as far as Britain is concerned, not a single fact to support his generalisations. That the rule of law precedes, both logically and historically, liberalism and democracy may be true, but to draw from this so wide a theory as his (and incidentally a condemnation of elections in Indo-China) is surely without justification.

In the first place he claims to base his anti-democratic ideas on historical experience, saying that the British have always been liberals rather than democrats and speaks of liberalism as though it were something unchanging in our history, at least since the 17th century. This is manifestly not true. What we would now understand by liberalism (or as I would prefer to say constitutional democracy) is a very recent development. It is moreover a continually expanding concept. For example, the atmosphere of tolerance in our social life is quite new—witness the bitter labour relations of the 1920's, or the Irish dispute, or Chartism, or the barbaric penal code of the 18th century. The "liberty" established by the Revolution of 1688 was the liberty of property owners from undue interference from arbitrary government, the Whig view of liberty was largely negative and made no pretence at universality. Even as late as the mid-19th century Disraeli could still legitimately speak of "the two nations" and Marx derived his theories of class warfare partly from observation of Victorian industrial cities. As Mr. Worsthorne says, England never pretended to be democratic; but what he ignores is that the so-called liberal attitude extended only to those sections of the community within the pale of the constitution.

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The "Rule of Law" may have existed but the laws themselves were changed as the franchise was extended. Neither the middle classes nor the working classes could get what they wanted until they first had the vote. The Revolution of 1688 created a constitution which *could* be changed by peaceful means. Yet the 1820's almost saw a revolutionary situation develop; and even after 1832 the piece-meal extension of the franchise came only after lengthy agitation, not all of it peaceful. Thus an aristocratic constitution became a democratic one.

This process came about not because of an unchanging ideal of liberty but as the result of political struggles with the meaning of liberty changing all the time. . . .

If limited democracy has grown out of parliamentary government, it is also true to say that the advent of universal suffrage has added to our concept of liberty the demand for social justice, for freedom from unemployment, poverty, and arbitrary inequality. Government by consent now means by the consent of everybody—to the extent that everybody participates in some of the processes of government.

Thus the story is a much more complex one than Mr. Worsthorne suggests. Moreover, I cannot see that it has any direct bearing on elections in Indo-China or any other country. It is not very useful to be told that an election in Indo-China is not the same as an election in England; or to point out that an election which results in a Communist victory is, by our standards, unsatisfactory. We surely cannot wait for a century until a middle class comes into being and, perhaps, produces constitutional rule, nor can we export our own system by educating Asiatic leaders at Eton—as Mr. Worsthorne seems to be saying in his patronising remarks about Mr. Nehru. We may have little hope of preventing Asiatic countries from joining the Communist bloc, but it is worth trying by not alienating them, by fostering their sense of independence and by helping them to raise their standards of living so that Communism will begin to lose some of its appeal. Merely to say that the will of their peoples is dangerous, is out of date. To deny the force of popular movements in Asia and Africa is both unrealistic and futile; we may say that by our standards they are meaningless or unpleasant, but they will still create their own standards without regard to our prejudices or to mistaken views of our own constitutional history.

B. J. Stevens

Monmouth School, Monmouth

Through Coloured Glasses?

With great interest I read Mr. Richard Wright's "Indonesian Notebook" in Encounter No. 23. Mr. Wright wrote with great feeling and passion, but I am afraid while he was here in Indonesia he had been looking through "coloured-glasses," and had sought behind every attitude he met colour and racial feelings. The majority of the people with whom Mr. Wright had come into contact in Indonesia (one of the best-known Indonesian novelists, and others) belong to the new generation in Indonesia, and are the least racial and colour conscious of the various groups in Indonesia. They are all amazed to read Mr. Wright's notebook in which Mr. Wright quotes them saying things which they never had said, or to which they did not put meaning as accepted by Mr. Wright.

I do not want to imply that there is no colour feeling in Indonesia, but I want to protest Mr. Wright's allegation that "this racial business" has become a way of life in Asia. This is just not true.

While Mr. Wright's notebook makes interesting reading, I am afraid he failed to present a true and balanced picture of the intellectual situation in Indonesia today.

Colour or racial problems are just not our problems.

Mochtar Lubis

Editor-in-Chief
Indonesia Raya
Djakarta

[Mr. Wright replies:—

No. I did not see Indonesia through "coloured-glasses" nor did I feel it with a "religious" skin. For the three weeks I stayed in Jakarta and Bandung, all the talk I heard was of race and religion. And the speeches delivered at Bandung were loaded with race and religion. To me, this seemed natural and inevitable.

I would commend to Mr. Lubis's attention the full and definitive account of my Bandung report which will be published in the United States in March of this year under the title: *The Color Curtain*. There I discuss in detail the *nature* of the racial feeling I found not only in Indonesia, but in the Asian personality as a whole.

Think hard, my friend Lubis, and you will recall the discussions that took place in your car as we drove through the Java mountains.]

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BOOKS

Truth in Time of Trouble

DURING the Spanish Civil War and through the whole period of appeasement, there were many who, like the present reviewer, regularly read *The Week*, that brilliant broadsheet of inside information, and speculated about the character and aims of its author. It was widely known that he was Mr. Claud Cockburn, who had resigned his post as Washington Correspondent of *The Times* for political reasons, and it was inferred that he was a Communist. Now at last, with Mr. Cockburn's autobiography,* curiosity ought to be satisfied. But this autobiography, like *The Week* itself, is not only very entertaining, but also mystifying. Mr. Cockburn has a style of almost Wodehousean irresponsibility and gaiety, and he uses this style to cover both his skill as a journalist and his serious political purposes. His method is to say in effect: "See what a racket politics is, or journalism is, or *The Times,* or my own career," and then to tell some amusing and improbable stories. The message is concealed in the stories. In *The Week* the reader was invited to watch the secret manœuvres which lay behind the pompous headlines of the official press, and to appreciate the political scene as an illustration of Marxist laws, as Fascism steadily advanced across the map. As propaganda the tone and style were extremely effective; there was an appeal to knowingness, to the snobbery of inside information, and at the same time there were some of the pleasures of a detective story in serial form—which of the revelations could be possibly true, or nearly true? The little ill-printed sheets, which arrived each week in an ordinary envelope, were rarely dull, and often predicted the future correctly. The public attitude of the government, and of its friends, to the Nazis was so unbelievably stupid that Mr. Cockburn's revelations of conspiracy seemed not entirely incredible. The stodgy mediocrity and incompetence of English politics at that time were made the materials of a Central European farce, presented in serial form, and they became less unbearable in that form. At the centre of the farce was the Cliveden Set, and earlier, during the Spanish Civil War, there were the manœuvres of the Non-Intervention Committee, whose evasions were often defended in the House of Commons by a rising young Tory, Mr. R. A. Butler.

Mr. Cockburn now explains that he learnt his conspiratorial theory of politics in Budapest and Berlin. He seems to have been the type of Englishman who, after the constraints of a conventional education, finds liberation in some other part of the world, where English conventionality does not exist, and for ever afterwards feels at home only outside his own country. In his case the land of liberation was not some Arab country, or the Far East, with which his family had been associated, but Central Europe. The phrases of 19th century English liberalism, heard at school, had meant nothing to him, but in Budapest, and later in Berlin, politics became alive and intelligible, among men and women who took it for granted that one could survive only by political intrigue in any period of catastrophe; and almost all periods are periods of catastrophe. This is the world which Mr. Koestler has described as a native, and to Mr. Cockburn it seemed refreshingly remote from the pomposities and hypocrisies of English bourgeois life. He entered with gusto into this enclosing medium of intrigue, and his later judgments of English politics were always coloured by it, often with strange results. His account of life in Berlin, as a *Times* Correspondent under the great Norman Ebbutt, is at many points an echo of Mr. Isherwood's unforgettable novels: the sense of coming destruction, the corruption, the sentimentality, the casualness. Mr. Cock-

* *In Time of Trouble.* By CLAUD COCKBURN. Rupert Hart-Davis. 21s.

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burn saw and enjoyed it all, and became a Marxist. Then in 1929 he went to America to see whether the great American boom was proving Marx to be wrong, as so many people said. He watched the Wall Street crash and interviewed Al Capone, and, typically, Wall Street and Al Capone are virtually all that he here recalls of America. He describes, in a brilliantly comical and lifelike scene, how he finally persuaded Geoffrey Dawson that, in spite of his ancestry, he was "a Red" (Dawson's word), and therefore unsuitable as the Washington Correspondent of *The Times*, successor to Sir Wilmott Lewis. The story moves lightly on to the foundation of *The Week*, its success, fighting and espionage in Spain, a friendship with a Russian Commissar. The picaresque style allows all the transitions to be left unexplained: above all, his relations with the Communist Party and his knowledge of its work in Spain. He chooses to represent himself as almost a political playboy, an Englishman looking for adventure, who happened to find a mission to expose official deceptions. But this was a serious mission, consonant with fighting in Spain. Mr. Cockburn is less than candid.

LOOKING back to the thirties, it now seems that half the appeal of Marxism in England lay in an exaggeration of political realism, of a type which was not Karl Marx's own. From the Napoleonic wars until 1939, English political life had been effectively insulated against social upheavals in Europe. The habits of parliamentary liberalism had developed behind a psychological barrier which divided English internal politics from the effects of the Russian revolution. The consequence was that almost everyone in England, whether of the Right or of the Left, at first found it impossible to grasp the phenomenon of Fascism, or really to believe what they were told about it; for it had no conceivable place in their psychology of political behaviour. They could not imagine such extreme situations, or conceive of the possibility of fear and mass brutality, and of the wish to destroy, existing on such a scale. Even Sir Winston Churchill was still arguing only in terms of the traditional balance of power. This is why the 1930's was the age of the great foreign correspondents; a few of them steadily told the monstrous truth which almost no one could understand and accept. There must have been many who, like myself, often wondered whether the bloodcurdling prophecies of the Left Book Club, or the premonitions of Mr. Auden and Mr. Isherwood, were not in part a projection of hysteria. I was finally convinced that a new age of violence had opened only by Rauschning's *The Revolution of Destruction*, which had seemed at first a wholly incredible fantasy; this book was convincing, just because the author was an ordinary nationalist and it seemed impossible that he should have imagined these new forms of political behaviour. In these circumstances, when all liberal presuppositions about human behaviour were being upset, Marxism had an appeal because it took violence and conspiracy for granted as the underlying political realities everywhere; Marxists eagerly explained that the psychological assumptions of English liberalism no longer corresponded with the facts. They could argue that the long English immunity from the effects of social revolutions in Europe was ending, and that parliamentary liberalism had always depended on this immunity. They were wrong, as the events of 1940 and 1945 were to show. (Mr. Cockburn conveniently ends his story at the Czech crisis.) But they were less wrong than that great majority who thought that writers in the Left Book Club were hysterically exaggerating the atrocities of Fascism, and exaggerating also the imminence of Communism as its strongest alternative in Europe. Nothing is more difficult than to recapture a complacency which has been destroyed by experience, and to imagine what it was like not to have known of gas-chambers and genocide; nothing is more difficult than to reconstruct the presuppositions and mood which preceded a waking up to a new reality outside. The Marxists produced the facts and said: "See how parochial, how absurdly unreal, your liberal assumptions are: violence is the stuff of politics: which side are you on?" Now the lesson has been learnt, English isolation is ended and liberal complacency is less protected. Everyone now knows that habits of legality and debate are always a thin layer, easily shattered at any time. Mr. Cockburn was an early and crude realist, who was always bored by liberals and by the Labour Party; he preferred to look for the sources of power in clubs and country-houses, which

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must surely be the English equivalent of the cafés and salons of Budapest and Berlin. This was also a misreading of the facts. It turned out that democracy in England was not a façade; the country-houses were the façades.

But Mr. Cockburn does effectively recall one aspect of the period, the journalists' attacks upon liberal complacency, even if he still does not state the opinions upon which his own attack rested. And many of the stories are excellent: of H. G. Wells, for instance, shrewdly nervous at a demonstration in Hyde Park, and of Mr. John Strachey as an intermediary of the Palace during the Abdication. There is no kind of history of Communism in the 1930's in this autobiography, indeed no history of anything; but there are echoes of the past for those who enjoyed *The Week*, and Mr. Cockburn is still as good as ever at mystification. The whole truth is not his interest.

Stuart Hampshire

THE SCHOLAR IN THE PANTRY

THERE must be few English middle-class people over a certain age for whom the word "servants" does not evoke overtones of memory as readily as the madeleine did for Proust. Born the year before the outbreak of the First World War to a middle-class family that had "known better days," I find the word peculiarly evocative. My parents only maintained servants in the plural by the skin of their financial teeth; they were therefore in some degree happy to sink their personal inability to maintain the household they had known in rosier days beneath the general breakdown of domestic service which gradually engulfed the middle classes in the twenties and thirties. Perhaps, however, because it was the thin edge of a once substantial wedge, the position of the servants in our house loomed very large. "The servants" were for many years my only intelligence of the "lower classes." Behaviour towards "the servants" was the central pin of the social-ethical structure to which I was introduced in childhood. I have subsequently learnt that the almost ingratiating behaviour towards servants, which I was brought up to believe was the mark of breeding, is far from the code of the upper classes which is much more insolent. Apart from preferring the excessive politeness which I was taught, however, I still — against all experience — tend to judge people socially by their adherence to what I was taught. It was through a dislike of certain aspects of my parents' relations to their servants that the first glimmerings of radicalism were awoken in me; it is, I suspect, with some faint memory of childhood bliss in the kitchen that I surround all Utopian pictures of classless happiness. I shared, in fact, in the final mouldering end of a very long English middle-class tradition. True enough, many young English middle-class couples have servants again—two Italians or a Latvian and a German—but this is like having the *New Yorker* or Mr. Muggeridge's *Punch* instead of the old Punch we once knew.

I make no apology for this long personal note in reviewing Professor Hecht's study of 18th century servants,* for the first thing that will strike any English reader of his book is its deadness, its naïveté, its utter remoteness from the heart of the subject. The servants of English literature ran through my mind as I read it, protesting that this compound of meagre statistics, newspaper advertisements, and odd scraps from diaries was a meaningless travesty of their lives. Pamela and Joseph, Strap and Winifred right through Searle and the boiled eggs and Miggs to the servants' hall of *Loving* and the butlers of Miss Compton Burnett defy Professor Hecht's attempt to put the scientific pin through their guts. One page of dialogue between Slipslop and her lady or of Denner with Mrs. Transome would tell us more of the strange love-hate relationship between mistress and maid than all the Professor's 228 pages. It is a subject the least susceptible to what is called the scientific method of social history of any that I can imagine.

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* *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth Century England*. By J. JEAN HECHT. Routledge. 25s.

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THIS is not, of course, to say that there are not interesting facts in Professor Hecht's study. He gives, for instance, certain contemporary estimates of the total number of servants at different dates in the century. These estimates, as he points out, are hardly reliable; nevertheless they do underline the vast size of the servant population—roughly one in every eleven persons of the whole population of the United Kingdom and one in every four and a half persons of the population of London. The tables of wage changes which he gives for each type of servant is also interesting, but it must, in fact, be based on very fragmentary evidence. His accounts of the system of "vails" or tips, of the employment agencies, the livery system and the retirement prospects of servants contain some interesting details. For the rest, however, his observations and conclusions must seem superfluous to an English reader where they do not seem doubtful. It hardly needs a learned study to describe the duties of footmen, gardeners, stewards or cooks. Any person with any interest in English 18th century social life will not wish to be informed that a French cuisine was favoured by the upper classes or that a knowledge of landscape gardening raised the importance of a gardener. The final conclusion of the whole book, that domestic service acted as an important means of introducing the lower classes to the more civilised behaviour of their social betters, does not surprise. The accompanying statement that it also introduced them to aristocratic vices seems of less general validity: it was surely not necessary. In his preface, Professor Hecht assures us that although his sources are necessarily the views of the literate, his study does not materially reflect the attitude of master rather than man. I cannot accept this. Eighteenth century servants—particularly the London servants of the rich—were probably in a large number of cases idle, extortionate, and dishonest. The quotations from letters to the press, however, which Professor Hecht offers, seem to me one and all the time-honoured grumbles of disappointed, bad employers. Satisfied employers do not write "letters about servants" to the papers. Indeed I should doubt if the better sort of dissatisfied ones do or did. As to his emphasis upon the contrast between the lusty health of footmen and their lapdog, extravagant costume, it may well have been that rich

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employers liked to have handsome men in gorgeous uniforms in their service, but there is a note of the academic naïveté which runs through the whole book in applying Veblen's time-worn theories to such sartorial details.

On two of the most interesting aspects of his subject Professor Hecht states that no evidence is available. We are told very little of the changes in servant status. The resulting picture, as the author says, is a static one; yet the 18th century has long since ceased to be regarded as an unchanging one. We are told next to nothing about the servants of the middle classes, yet it was exactly the growth of servants in middle-class houses, the change in apprentice status that so swelled the domestic ranks in that age. It is surprising that information is not available on these two subjects, but if Professor Hecht is right in his contrary assertion then it is only one more proof that the subject is not susceptible to such "scientific" sociological treatment. The truth is that in earlier centuries when internal or "literary" evidence is lacking about the lives of the lower classes we may have to fall back upon inadequate statistics. In later centuries, too, in the 19th or early 20th centuries, where statistics are more complete, we may choose to judge by them, though even here we would do well to make use of fiction. But in the 18th century, where statistics are so poor and direct comment so selective, the picture is inevitably poorer than that given in novels or plays. Professor Hecht's narrative, indeed, comes suddenly to life when on rare occasion he quotes Smollett in the letters of Matt and Tabitha Bramble. For the rest the book is a mass of interesting small details and general observations that could hardly be applied more particularly to servants in the 18th than in the 19th century. Of the only peculiar feature of the 18th century on which much material must be available—the great influence of Wesley's teaching on the servant class—Professor Hecht observes that it is so large a subject that it must form the material for a separate study.

Angus Wilson

A GUIDE TO THE COLD WAR

THERE is a much smaller serious literature on the problems of the "cold war" in Britain than in America; and Mr. G. L. Arnold's book*—an analysis, political and economic in almost equal parts, of the present balance of world power, and of the tasks facing the West in conducting a successful policy of co-existence — is therefore particularly welcome.

"The political analyst," writes Mr. Arnold, "can best assist the planner and the politician by reducing his concepts to the sort of methodical order that corresponds to the world we actually live in." This task he performs, in the political and historical parts of the book, with an excellent mixture of scholarship and political shrewdness (though when he turns to economics, his touch is rather less sure). The change in the world balance of power during the past three decades, the collapse of the visionary "one-world" hopes of the immediate post-war years, the problems posed by the rise of revolutionary nationalism in the less advanced countries, the development of the Soviet régime—these all receive a percipient and highly stimulating analysis.

Mr. Arnold's policy recommendations are based on the likelihood, though not the certainty, that the cold war will persist for many years to come, but will not develop into a full-scale atomic world war — though this does not rule out the possibility of local conflicts, which may even turn into wars on the Korean or Indo-Chinese pattern. But given that an all-out atomic war is avoided, the problem facing the West during what may be a long period of co-existence is how to stem the march of Communism without being drawn into war; and diplomatic and economic issues will take precedence over military ones. "By the cold war we understand competitive attempts to alter the

* *The Pattern of World Conflict.* By G. L. ARNOLD. Allen and Unwin. 21s.

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balance of power without overt resort to force. Since the uncertain factors in the global contest are the great undeveloped countries in the throes of an industrial revolution —principally India, the remainder of south-east Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America — the conflict reduces itself to a choice between Communism and democracy. If the Western countries can demonstrate their ability to solve the social problems of the world under conditions of political freedom, the edge will be taken off the Communist drive for world domination."

The main problem which Mr. Arnold is concerned with is the familiar, and mainly economic, one of the framework within which the undeveloped countries will industrialise — whether Communist or democratic. But before discussing this, he offers a great deal of excellent (though often rather sharp) advice on the purely political and diplomatic conduct of the cold war. Most of this is addressed to the United States, and not many British critics will dissent from it — advice not to turn anti-Communism into pro-capitalism, not to insist on the theme of free enterprise and economic liberalism, and generally to remember that the remainder of the free world need not be expected to subscribe to the political and economic tenets of the Right wing of the Republican Party.

There is, however, one controversial political proposal. Mr. Arnold is an Atlantic Union enthusiast, and wants a definitely federal and supranational political Atlantic structure. Unfortunately this is much too briefly argued to be convincing. A hundred acute practical difficulties suggest themselves at once (quite apart from the fact that neither governments nor public opinion appear to want any such thing); and it is not very helpful to throw out so major and revolutionary a proposal, and then scarcely bother to discuss its practical implications at all. This is to be guilty of the utopianism which Mr. Arnold himself criticises so harshly in discussing the "neo-liberal" post-war plans.

But generally the political analysis and recommendations are illuminating to a high degree. My main criticism concerns the economic analysis. Here the book is rather unbalanced, and unduly pessimistic from a Western point of view. This is because Mr. Arnold overestimates both the West's economic difficulties and the Soviet economic threat.

In discussing the former, he is still obsessed with the dollar gap. He has no difficulty in showing, as many have done before him, how unrealistic at the time were the liberal "multilateral-convertible" economic plans of the Bretton Woods era. But he also underestimates just how far the world has now recovered from the post-war structural difficulties which gave the dollar problem its critical urgency in the years 1945 to 1951. It is now as unrealistic to talk in terms of extreme and permanent "dollar scarcity" as to preach a return to pure free trade; and most economists might be rather sceptical of Mr. Arnold's view, plausible as it seemed a few years ago, that the more rapid rise in American productivity (if indeed it is a fact, which itself is rather doubtful) must give rise to a permanent structural unbalance in world trade. At any rate there is a tendency to understate in this book the immense improvement over the last few years. Both the pattern and the volume of world trade are now significantly healthier than at any time since pre-1914; and proposals for some new, elaborate framework of "planning" for world trade, based on much larger economic units than we now have, cannot be seriously defended as an urgent necessity, or indeed as likely to do much good at all.

Generally Mr. Arnold underestimates both the current economic health and the prospective rate of growth of the Western world. On Germany, for example, while rightly playing down any hopes (or fears) that Germany will ever again achieve a position of military or economic superiority over Soviet Russia, he nevertheless ignores the fact that the German rate of growth is now probably faster than the Russian. Similarly the discussion of Italy ignores the spectacular increases in production which are now in progress there.

The converse of this attitude is a tendency (very common today) to exaggerate the Soviet economic threat. Mr. Arnold's views on Soviet growth, in the context of the recent controversy in the columns of Encounter, would elicit more approval from Mr. Wiles than from Mr. Colin Clark. But even if we accept the higher and more alarming estimates, it is still not clear that they justify all the pessimistic deductions commonly drawn from them.

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Thus Mr. Arnold appears to assume, without discussion, that political and military strength today is a direct function of the rate of industrial growth. But is this obviously so? Military strength surely now depends less on steel and coal production, than on successful scientific research and atomic development; and these are not necessarily correlated with total growth. Political strength, in the sense of the relative attraction of (say) Russia and America for the under-developed areas, depends on the amount of aid which they are respectively willing to make available; and this, at present high levels of national output, depends far more on the political decisions of governments than on the exact rate of growth. That is, the advanced Western countries are now quite easily able to afford the sum required, from an economic point of view; the question is simply whether they have the will to proffer them.

Generally Mr. Arnold's economic judgments need to be treated with some reserve. Thus he has a brief but highly dogmatic half-page on the relation between equality and incentives—a subject which most economists and sociologists would think required a rather more subtle elaboration. However, this comes in the context of a comment on the post-war Labour Government, and is perhaps to be explained simply by his curiously irritable hostility to that Government—mainly, it seems, on the grounds that it concentrated on welfare and "levelling" rather than planning, though what kind of additional "planning" it should have done is never made clear. (And in the light of the fact that by 1951 industrial output was nearly fifty per cent higher than before the war, what is one to make of the phrase "the almost total failure, from a production viewpoint, of the British Labour experiment in 1945–51"?)

However, perhaps none of this matters very much in practice, since Mr. Arnold's actual conclusions about the need for capital aid to the under-developed countries are incontrovertible. And in any case the real strength of the book lies in its political and historical analysis; and this, although marred by an occasional arrogance of tone, is so good that every "planner and politician" in Britain, and simple students besides, would be the wiser and clearer for reading it.

C. A. R. Crosland

LADY LAVINIA'S DOVE-CARRIAGE

BOTANY and poetry have usually had a hand in each other's pocket. English poets, even in an age of reason, have normally been at least on nodding terms with the flowers of the field, and sometimes very much more than that. Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton were on the whole book-botanists, making up their posies from Theocritus or de Lorris rather than from pasture or underwood; but Shakespeare knew his wild-flowers—and the Stratford names for them. The five red spots at the throat of the cowslip-flower had not escaped him; and moreover (as Mr. Geoffrey Grigson argues interestingly and convincingly in his sumptuous *Englishman's Flora**) he had almost certainly studied Gerarde's *Herball*, first published in 1597. Wordsworth brooded with philosophical care upon the habits of the Lesser Celandine; G. M. Hopkins with æsthetic care upon Bluebells

> in falls of sky-colour washing the brows and slacks of the ground with vein-blue; the stalks . . . making a brittle rub and jostle like the noise of a hurdle strained by leaning against.

But it is not only the poets who have strayed into the botanists' fields; the botanists in their turn have culled a good many simples from the grassy sides of Parnassus. Indeed the mere study of flowers has seemed to inspire the writer with a sort of rough poetry, in a way that the study of field-mice, sea-shells, or migratory birds has not. It was difficult of course, except in the angrier or

* *The Englishman's Flora.* By GEOFFREY GRIGSON. Phoenix House. £4 15s.

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drearier purlieus of theology, for anyone in the 16th century to open his prose mouth without poetry falling out of it; but Gerarde's clumsily graceful style is second, for charm and power of suggestion, to none:

The first of these Passe-flowers hath many small leaves finely cut or jagged, like those of carrots; among which rise up naked stalks, rough and hairie; whereupon do grow beautifull flowers bell fashion, of a bright delaid purple: in the bottom whereof groweth a tuft of yellow thrums and in the middle of the thrums thrusteth foorth a small purple pointell. . . .

And there is no more inebriatingly nostalgic reading in the world than the ramble-diaries of the 19th century botanist-rectors, those polymathic and cheerfully Christian gentlemen who, deprived by enforced country-residence of college libraries and philosophical conversation, turned their intellectual energies upon the rocks and blossoms of their parishes; and, after having usefully employed the morning of a field-day in copying an Anglo-Saxon inscription, identifying ten bryophytes, six beetles, an earthworm, thirty-four lichens, and an oolitic conglomerate, climbing an elm-tree to investigate a cuckoo in a siskins' nest, and talking to an old man about fairies, would then continue:

After an excellent collation of cold beef and porter, we set forth again, this time in a north-westerly direction, when the rain, which had been threatening all day, broke out suddenly, and the rest of the party retired hastily to the conservatory. Mr. Harris and myself, however, took the opportunity to examine the marsh more thoroughly, where our persistence was this time more than compensated by the discovery of *Lythrum hyssopifolia* and the rare blue-flowered *Lathyrus palustris*. It was nearly half past six, and the deluge continued unabated, before we presented ourselves (unannounced) at the door of Castlenugent Rectory; but the worthy incumbent, no whit abashed at our somewhat bedraggled appearance, soon had us to rights with a dish of the cup that cheers and in good shape for the ten mile ride back to Hereford.

TO EXPLORE the whys and wherefores of this old alliance is beyond the scope of a review. But it may be remarked that taxonomy, the perception of "species," is one of the main pursuits of the poet, who in all things is precise, differentiating, a connoisseur of the particular and specific "instress" proper to each named flower or beast and shared by it with no other. And this unique quality is far more apparent in the species of plants than in those of birds or fossils; for the plant is immediately apparent to no fewer than four of the five senses (sound only excepted)—the goldness of buttercups, hairiness of mullein, sweetness of mignonette, but above all (in earlier centuries) the intimacy of taste, the fact that every plant, unlike every bird, has its own savour, that some sustain like wheat, some flavour like mint, some cure like feverfew, some like deadly nightshade kill. To each its "virtue," or its toxin. Perhaps too the poet sees the plant as the eidolon of himself, of the poetic process—the green, perhaps spiny, perhaps inconspicuous, creature that suddenly in season blows out its "thin clear bubble of blood," its bloom or poem.

But, so far as strictly scientific botany is now concerned, the age of poetry is past. An attitude towards species that, in one direction, distinguishes four hundred sub-species of the common Blackberry, and, in the other, declares primrose and cowslip mere varieties

GEORGE SAND'S

WINTER IN MAJORCA

translated and annotated by
ROBERT GRAVES
With 'Refutation of George Sand' by José Quadrado

George Sand's *Un Hiver à Majorque* was the result of her disastrous three months' stay in Majorca with Chopin and her two children. Robert Graves, who has now translated this remarkable travel book, provides an historical summary suggesting the reasons for her scathing attack on the Majorcans, their way of life and their religion. He also includes José Quadrado's spirited reply to her, published in *La Palma*.

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of a single type, is hardly likely to commend itself to the poetic enquirer. All the rarities have (practically speaking) been long ago discovered and docketed—and, quite probably, destroyed, by housing-estate or fen-reclamation. The poetic mind is restricted to the periphery of the subject, to plant-superstitions, etymologies of names, or histories of botanists.

The Englishman's Flora is much the most important contribution to this sort of botany for many years. Mr. Grigson confines his attention to English wildflowers as they have affected the body and mind of man—their folk-lore, their local names, their culinary and medicinal uses, their literary and artistic symbolism, their effects on human economy or the way in which human habits have distributed or restricted them. The reader, whether he is botanic or unbotanic, will certainly be fascinated by the extraordinary story of Oxford Ragwort: native to the volcanic slopes of Vesuvius and Etna; imported into Oxford Botanic Garden in the 17th century; living a precarious naturalised life on walls within a tome's-throw of the Bodleian in the 18th; making a sudden dramatic expansion in the 19th, along the clinkers of the newly-built railways; and reaching its apotheosis in the 20th, when the fire-scarred rubble of the London bomb-sites finally provided it with its perfect habitat. He can find out why Hazel is used for divining, what Ophelia's "long purples" were, or why Cowslips are sometimes called Keys of Heaven. But the most important single feature of this book is the lists of local plant-names, by far the largest and completest ever collected. Where Mr. Grigson is concerned, a Primrose by a river's brim a Buckie-faalie, Butter Rose, Darling of April, Golden Stars, Lent Rose, May Spink, or Simmerin, is to him.

The multiplicity and variety of these regional names is quite fantastic. By simply glancing through this Roget of the flower-world, the descriptive novelist could conjure up scene after scene without being under the necessity of varying his actual flora. The whimsy bogus-pastoral scene in which Fair Maids of February with Starry Eyes, casting aside their Holland Smocks (though not their Maiden's Honesty), become Naked Virgins[1]: the rustic romance of Blooming Sally, Clip-me-Dick, Love-and-Tangle, Clinging Sweethearts[2]: the Rabelaisian riot of Wet-a-bed, Piss-pot, Belly-wind, Mare-fart, Open-arse, Bum-pipe, and Rump[3]: the junk-shop in which, after distastefully fingering through a disgusting pyramid of Beggars' Blankets, Old Men's Glass Eyes, Old Women's Toe-nails, and Lousy Soldiers' Buttons, you come suddenly upon Queen Anne's Handkerchief and Nelson's Bugle, and bear them off triumphantly in Lady Lavinia's Dove-carriage[4]: perhaps best of all, the Gothick horror-novel night where Moonlight, Dead Man's Grief and Hagworm Flower burgeon in swathes between the headstones, Convict Grass and Madwoman's Milk dot the abandoned workings, and from the water-meadows comes the dull chink of the Lazarus Bells and the dull thump of the Drooping Bells of Sodom.[5]

Indeed the more these lists are examined, the more apparent become the fantasy and fertility of the rustic mind. Hogweed, a coarse and common umbellifer, enjoys seventy names, including Bear's Breech, Bee's Nest, Beggar-weed, Bunwort, Cowbumble, Devil's Oatmeal, Dryland Scout, Gipsy's Lace, Humpy-scrumples, Keck, Lisamoo, Pig's Bubble, Rabbit's Vittles, Scabby Hands, Snake's Meat, and Wippul-squip. Perhaps the most sinisterly beautiful names have been given to the Fritillary; besides Lazarus Bell and Drooping Bell of Sodom, it may be addressed as Bloody Warrior, Crowcup, Death Bell, Doleful Bell of Sorrow, Falfalary, Five-leaved Grass, Frockup, Guinea-hen Flower, Leopard's Lily, Shy Widow, Snake's Head, Turkey's Egg, and several others. This is all the more remarkable in that the Fritillary (as Mr. Grigson regretfully but ruthlessly shows) can scarcely have been naturalised before the 18th century, and not till 1780 in its classic station at Oxford. But indeed the process of flower-naming is by no means dead: Town Hall Clock, Gramophone

1: Snowdrop, Star of Bethlehem, Bindweed, Old Man's Beard, Autumn Crocus.

2: Great Willow-herb, Cypress Spurge, Hop Trefoil, Goosegrass.

3: Dandelion, Bindweed, Old Man's Beard, Ragwort, Medlar, Dandelion, Wild Radish.

4: Mullein, Pimpernel, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Red Campion, Cow Parsley, Bugle, Monkshood.

5: Cow-parsley, Sea Campion, Stitchwort, Red Valerian, Sun Spurge, Fritillary.

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Horns, and Policeman's Helmet[6] betray their recent origin; and in the last thirty years that tough little London adventive Galinsoga has become Gallant Soldier, and the Mesembryanthemum naturalised on the Cornish cliffs has been renamed Sally-my-handsome. Perhaps in another thirty years Fenugreek will be known through Wessex as Fancy Grigsons.

Hilary Corke

6: Moschatel, Honeysuckle, Himalayan Balsam.

THE COLLEGE AND THE UNIVERSITY

THE state of academic freedom in America has recently become a matter of some attention—or shall we say notoriety? Some of this attention has had less the odour of righteousness than of *Schadenfreude*. More important, even the part of it—doubtless the majority—that was sincere in its concern, was lacking in a sense of proportion, in that it assumed a distinctively American phenomenon and problem could be measured by European rules. It is always exhilarating to sound the clarion and rally to the side of the angels—assuming (as we do) that academic freedom is encouraged up there. But the United States is not inhabited by angels; it is not even inhabited by Englishmen.

This misunderstanding may be avoided in the future if some enterprising British publisher—he would probably have to be altruistic as well—were to bring out an edition of a book that has recently appeared in New York, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*.* It is, one is tempted to say, a perfect book of its kind, big (over 500 pages), scholarly, thoughtful, and extremely well-written. And it is one of those rare and stimulating volumes that is even more valuable for the perplexities it encourages us to regard than for the consolation it offers to our advanced opinions.

"IT SEEMS to me a reproach to the land, that ever it should be so with our colleges, that, instead of being places of the greatest advantages for true piety, one cannot send a child thither without great danger of his being infected as to his morals. It is perfectly intolerable; and anything should be done, rather than it should be so." That was Jonathan Edwards in 1742, and his voice still rings through the land. To be sure, the United States is no longer the Calvinist country it was in his day. But it is far more Calvinist than even most Americans realise. The member of a board of trustees of a college may in fact be a Catholic or an agnostic; his family may have arrived from Europe only a generation or two ago; he nevertheless considers himself, and acts, as the presbyter of a congregation whose primary duty it is to guard the souls of students and teachers alike from "corruption"—whatever that may mean at any single time. The very structure of the American university encourages him to take on this rôle. In Europe, the teachers and scholars preceded the university and gave form to it, and for this they were rewarded with guild privileges that still provide the pattern of academic freedom on that continent. In America, the founding of the colleges was a lay operation, and for many decades the teachers were young amateurs with no sense of vocation. The result is that, whereas in Europe the professors *are* the college, in America they *work for* the college, which is the trustees.

Up until the latter part of the 19th century, there was no such issue in America as academic freedom. In this, the picture resembled that of contemporary England, and was prettier to the extent that religious oaths were not demanded of either students or teachers. A professor was assumed to be competent in his field, and probably was; but his main task was to provide his students with the model of an educated Christian gentleman—elevated, reverent, uncontentious. The major conflict of this period, which had only an indirect (but important) bearing on academic freedom, was the vigorous but eventually unsuccessful struggle of the smaller denominational colleges to prevent the establishment

* By RICHARD HOFSTADTER and WALTER P. METZGER. Columbia University Press. $5.50.

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of large, non-sectarian, state-supported universities. This animosity still survives, and helps feed an intermittent inquisitorial zeal by state legislatures about the condition of grace in these institutions.

It was in the latter part of the 19th century that the idea of academic freedom came to America from, of all places, Germany. American scholars, who went there to study, returned as men with a vision: the provincial and rather soporific American college was to be transformed into a cultural centre for the sanctified pursuit of knowledge. The conditions for such a reformation were propitious. The universities were becoming larger, wealthier, more influential; the trustees, while not for a moment relinquishing ultimate control, were agreeable to the introduction of quasi-judicial procedures which restricted their power to meddle with the inner workings of the by now huge and complex academic corporation; the replacement of religion by science as the source of authoritative opinion made it possible to see in academic freedom an affirmative ethic—an indispensable precondition of gaining the truth—instead of a merely indulgent absence of constraint. Even the ineradicable puritanical temper appeared to offer no insuperable obstacle: after all, this same temper had always set great store by book learning, and with a brief battle over Darwinism easily won, there was ground for hope that the definition of the "spiritual" function of education would slowly evolve into something more generous.

It would be an error to say these dreams were not realised. In fact, they were to a large extent, which is why Harvard and Yale and Columbia are what they are today. As Messrs. Hofstadter and Metzger remark:

> The emergence of the university was nothing less than an educational revolution in the United States. Research took a place along with teaching as a major function. The methods and concepts of science displaced the authority of religion. The academic profession took on, for the first time in a full measure, the character, aspirations, and standards of a learned profession. . . . A self-conscious and well-formulated rationale for academic freedom appeared, framed in terms to fit the new realities of academic life. . . .

What was not foreseen was the unexpected and unprecedented stresses and strains to which the American university would be subjected in the 20th century. These were provoked by two historic events: the emergence of mass higher education; and the victory of pragmatism over all other philosophies, within the university itself.

THERE are in the United States today some two million college students. It is estimated that, in twenty years' time, the number may approach ten million. A college education is becoming a normal part of the American educational process, from which no one will be excluded. In the face of this fact, the German ideal of a university as a group of devoted scholars all working for the greater glory of *Wissenschaft* was bound to dissolve like a mirage. Of most American students it can hardly be said that they "go" to college; they "are sent," just as they are sent to elementary and high school. And they are sent to college for exactly the same reasons they are sent to elementary school: to obtain skills necessary for worldly success, at some level or other, and to be disciplined into good citizens and decent persons—to learn, if not piety in the old sense of the term, then at least *pietas*: civic virtue and civic probity. Furthermore, this very "university" to which they are sent is a radically new institution under an old name. It has a department of home economics, a faculty of journalism, schools of business administration, engineering, and farm husbandry. What can the search for truth mean to the herd of young people—conformists by origin, temperament, and destiny—who flock into them?

It is always difficult to combine and harmonise the two functions of scholar and teacher. The purpose of the one is primarily intellectual, of the other primarily moral. It has long been recognised, in all countries, that a teacher at the lower rungs of the mass educational ladder does not have that academic freedom which is due in principle to a university professor: his pupils have only a limited capacity for—and a faint-hearted interest in—truth, and in his task the emphasis is on the formation of their character rather than the substantial liberation of their minds. The average American university student is regarded by his family and community as a 'minor'—as he usually is, to all intents and purposes, despite his years. It is only too easy for all the puritan passions to

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be called into play when the impression gets about that the college *boy* or college *girl* (the terms themselves are significant) is being exposed to "dangerous" doctrines and persuasions.

This difficulty has been compounded by the extraordinary gulf that has opened, in the course of the past sixty years, between the states of mind—the "ideologies," if you will—of the academic world and the nation as a whole. Pragmatism is often thought of as an intrinsically American philosophy. It is, but as a philosophy—agnostic, sceptical, free-thinking—it characterises only the American academy; the rest of the country is often pragmatic enough in its worldly dealings, but it certainly does not accept pragmatism as a philosophy of life. As Santayana once observed:

> While the sentiments of most Americans in politics and morals, if a little vague, are very conservative, their democratic instincts, and the force of circumstances, have produced a system of education which anticipates all that the most extreme revolution could bring about; and while no one dreams of forcibly suppressing private property, religion, or the family, American education ignores these things, and proceeds as much as possible as if they did not exist.

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It is all very well for the American Association of University Professors to state that a university "should be an intellectual experimental station, where new ideas may germinate and where their fruit, though still distasteful to the community as a whole; may be allowed to ripen." This is doubtless what a university should be. In some ways, it is a description of what the medieval university rather deviously was. But what has this ideal to do with the realities of American college life, where most of the students will get their diploma without knowing a hypothesis from a syllogism? It is one of those paradoxes that pragmatists so detest, that the philosophy of pragmatism, nurtured on the democratic spirit and imbued with democratic fervour, should offer an excellent prescription for the training of an élite, but should have little bearing on the education of the populace as a whole, and should be vehemently rejected by that populace. It is no longer the case, as it once was, that a professor might be fired for daring to criticise a powerful vested interest: the principle of academic freedom is too solidly established for that. But it is correspondingly easier today to get the community as a whole worked up over the "un-American" attitudes that are supposedly being sponsored by the higher learning. In fact, of course, these attitudes—comprising the general outlook of pragmatism—are superbly American, and could have originated nowhere else; only they are not accepted by most Americans.

Now that the McCarthyist fever seems to have passed, we shall not hear very much about academic freedom in the United States. But the whole problem antedates Senator McCarthy, and survives him. It is not a question of a few notorious "cases" but of a fundamentally intractable situation. Not until there is a structural reform of higher education, reflecting some consensus about the ends of education in its various stages, will the issue cease to be bothersome. Which is to say: not until the problem is resolved of giving a higher education to *all* youth while preserving the highest standards of inquiry—and this is the very problem of democratic education itself. One suspects that, if it is America's problem today, it will be shared by others tomorrow.

Irving Kristol

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NEW ART BOOKS

Books To Be Treasured?

SINCE a reproduction gives us a picture without its scale and texture, we try to reconstruct these in our heads. And there is a conflict here. For instance, looking at the remarkable plate of the "Origin of the Milky Way" in *The National Gallery, London*, our memories and intuitions of the picture collide with the actual facts in front of us; for it is in the nature of design that it returns our attention to and enhances our awareness of the surface that bears it, and we discover that it is in this case the page, its texture, its layout, even the way in which the print is mounted, that is occupying more and more of our attention. Here certainly is an encouragement to art books to turn themselves into Fine Editions. Consciousness of the book itself seems to become greater in ratio with the accuracy and richness of the reproduction and also with the dimensions of the book. The more brilliant the colour and textural suggestiveness of the plates and the less easy the pages are to manage, to pocket, to flip, the more do the plates seem like pictures instead of reproductions of pictures.

The National Gallery, London, with its arty and awkward layout and its great weight, demands to be handled reverently: it is, as they say, a book to be treasured. It is not easy to say what else it is good for; there is little that it can do for the student, in spite of the accuracy of the plates. He cannot easily or truly compare one plate with another—each is too vivid, too complete. A museum like this may not have walls but it has hard covers and the air between them is stifling. Accuracy can be misleading and we must set against this kind of art book its opposite, the book that gives a partial and uniform abstract of a large number of pictures, books such as the little Editions Braun *Les Maîtres* (among their new titles are Seurat, Jongkind, Bourdelle), the Hyperion Miniatures (new titles include Bonnard and Matisse), or, for that matter, the invaluable illustrated catalogues of the National Gallery of before the war. It does not matter that on these smudgy and handy pages important pictures may be reduced to a few square inches, or that (in the Hyperion series) the colours may be fantastically travestied. At least there is not the continual nuisance of holding the book away from you so that the page can be seen as a shape; the pattern, the characteristic formula of each picture is there, and there are many others which can be speedily compared. Unobtrusive books like these put the least interference between the reader and the picture.

Pocket art books like Braun's succeed where the more ambitious Skira monographs *The Taste of Our Time* only half succeed. In these, all the plates are in colour. The colour itself is beautifully balanced (surely grey has rarely been shown so well without loss of adjustment of

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The following are the publications noticed in Andrew Forge's survey of recent picture-books:

The National Gallery, London. By SIR PHILIP HENDY. Thames and Hudson. £6 6s.
Seurat. By JOHN REWALD; **Jongkind.** By GEORGES BESSON; **Bourdelle.** By EMMANUEL AURICOSTE. Paris: Braun; London: Soho Gallery. 3s. 6d. each
Matisse. By GASTON DIEHL; **Bonnard.** By RAYMOND COGNIAT. Hyperion Press. 3s. 9d. each
Manet. By GEORGES BATAILLE. Geneva: Skira; London: Zwemmer. 35s.
Ivon Hitchens. By PATRICK HERON; **Graham Sutherland.** By EDWARD SACKVILLE-WEST. Penguin Books. 7s. 6d. each
Toulouse Lautrec. By R. H. WILENSKI; **Japanese Screen Painting.** By BASIL GRAY. Faber and Faber. 9s. 6d. each
Cézanne. By ALAN CLUTTON-BROCK. Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.
The Selective Eye. Edited by GEORGES and ROSAMUND BERNIER. Zwemmer. 45s.
Van Gogh, drawings and water-colours. By DOUGLAS COOPER. Macmillan. 35s.
The Life of the Buddha. By AVRIL DE SILVA-VIGIER. Phaidon Press. 47s. 6d.

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warm and cool colours on either side), but the local intensity of each picture is arbitrarily exaggerated. In one of the latest, *Manet*, introduced by G. Bataille, Manet's acrid greens are given the cold fire of enamel, his blacks become fat and glossy and seem to float above the rest. The thought that there are pictures behind these intense and vivid areas of paper has almost to be abandoned; they claim an autonomy which makes the book into something more like a casket than a channel. The separation from the originals that this sort of glittering reproduction leads to throws great weight upon the text. An interpretative essay of genius, one feels, is what is needed to carry the book off. Bataille does not succeed in doing this.

There is an important place for the short interpretative essay written in relation to a certain sequence of plates. The essay can fill in the void that seems to lie beneath the pages of the coloured picture-books. This is certainly the strength and value of three popular, elegant, and reasonably priced series, the Penguin Modern Painters (which have just put out *Ivon Hitchens*, text by Patrick Heron, and a new edition of *Graham Sutherland*) and the Faber Gallery (*Toulouse Lautrec* by R. H. Wilenski, *Cézanne*, Alan Clutton-Brock) and the Faber Gallery of Oriental Art (*Japanese Screen Painting*, by Basil Gray). The Faber Gallery, perhaps, has hit upon the happiest form for this kind of book —a dozen or so coloured plates, an introductory essay, and a page of text facing each picture. Within this limited and concentrated form both author and reader must take the coloured plates at their face value—there can be no mistaken intention here—the author takes his reader from page to page and the reader need never doubt as to the terms in which the author's points are being demonstrated.

English art books rarely go out of their way to evoke the atmosphere of Malraux's imaginary museum; we find it strong in *The Selective Eye*, an anthology compiled from the international art monthly, *l'Oeil*. The book has a powerful effect on the eye. It flashes coloured plates of Braque, Altdorfer, or details of medieval illuminations (how much enlarged?) and slips us candid shots of the youthful Picasso, a ruined Paladian Villa, a Catalan polychrome; it assures us that art is a party and we are all in on the inside. As if we had already been there too long, the impression is blurred. This is not just because of confused editing. It is because photographic reproduction has its positive effect as well as its negative effect; because, if in many cases, the rôle of the photograph is neutral, in many others it actively intervenes, bringing one work to terms with another, indicating analogies where none exist outside the half-world of reproductions Probably this is something that not many lecturers who juggle with lantern slides would like to come clean about.

In the case of drawings or water colours the physical connection between the original and the page is close and something near to facsimile can be made. Here accuracy plays its most bothering tricks. In a water colour or a drawing the relationship of individual brush strokes to the size of the paper is vital to its construction. In the *Van Gogh, drawings and water colours*, introduced by D. Cooper, each of the thirty plates looks so exactly like a Van Gogh water colour that the fact that a picture of 39 × 53 cm. is the same size on the page as one 24 × 31 cm. is distracting if one tries to work out the scale and misleading if one does not.

When sculpture is photographed, the status of the plate is clear. *The Life of the Buddha*, Phaidon Press, illustrates works of art from many different sources that deal with the Buddha's story. Sculptures frequently face paintings; when they do the different status of the reproductions is striking—the sculpture is a real object behind the page and light falls on it; but the frescoes, the silk paintings, the manuscripts, what are they? Although the photographs may make a new work out of the sculptures (by scale, light, juxtaposition, etc.), they never destroy it as an object outside the photograph. In photographs of certain modern painting the exact opposite can happen: the plate can completely absorb the work. Indeed, it is when it shows a Mondrian or a Leger that the coloured plate deserves to be called a reproduction: its status is like a lithograph's. An article on Leger's *Parade* in *The Selective Eye* has among other things a double page of the final work in full colour. It also has a large photograph showing Leger standing in front of the *Parade* resting his arms on another picture. The *Parade* suddenly strikes us as a unique object. This suggests an art book in which all reproductions were set against photographs of the works at a distance. In this way the status of the reproduction would be made definite.

A reproduction of a picture that uses perspective is an illusion of an illusion; problems of reference place a special value on the more limited kind of reproduction, those obscure postage stamps that we find crowded in rows on the pages of the illustrated catalogues. The luxury reproduction, even if it is a spitting facsimile of the original, never quite seems to achieve what we want of it and leaves us unsatisfied somewhere between the original and the print. We may value reproductions because they have made us free in time and space and released for us an "essential" art outside history

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The Oxford History of English Art

Edited by T. S. R. BOASE

This series will be completed in eleven volumes and will consider the subject chronologically, treating all branches of the visual arts as part of the general history of England. The following volumes have already been published:

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Preparation for Painting

The Purpose and Materials of the Artist

By LYNTON LAMB 'This is a book not to be borrowed from the lending library but to be purchased, treasured, read and re-read by all those who wish to make painting their hobby or their profession . . . . It is a work that is agreeable to read and which takes one, by the pleasantest of paths, from the fundamental question of painting to the no less essential problems of how to choose a good sable or how to stretch a canvas.' *The Listener* Illustrated 21*s. net*

The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer

By ERWIN PANOFSKY 'Panofsky's "Dürer" is already something of a classic, for in the twelve years since it was first published it has come to be recognised as one of the most penetrating and scholarly of monographs. This new edition is therefore to be most warmly welcomed. The book was originally published in two volumes, its production was lavish and it was inevitably very expensive, whereas now we have been given a one-volume version, and all that has been sacrificed is the Hand List and Concordance; the text and illustrations remain as in the original edition.' *Apollo* Illustrated 70*s. net* (Two volume, third edition, at £8. 8*s. net*, is still available) *Princeton University Press*

Oxford University Press

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—or because they have provided the art historian with the grist for his mill—either way the real point is that recognisable patterns of a lot of pictures can be brought together simultaneously and not that individually can they be wonderfully imitated.

Andrew Forge

Art and the Sahib

Indian Painting for the British 1770–1880. By MILDRED and W. G. ARCHER. (Oxford University Press. 45s.)

THIS is a valuable and informative account of the Indian-British school of painting, which originated when British influence, recently established in India, was rapidly extending its sway over the entire country. The book traces both the arousal of the Englishman's interest in the Indian scene and later his indifference to it. For the 18th century Englishman, India was an exciting novelty. Bred in the cult of romanticism which held the "noble savage" and all Nature in high esteem, the pioneer of the East India Company faithfully recorded his enthusiasms in sketchbook and memoirs as he travelled in leisurely fashion over a new country. His interest gave rise to a style of painting which, though wrought by Indians, was guided by his own British background and tastes. His 19th century counterpart, for whom India was no novelty, was much more matter-of-fact. Now ruler instead of merchant, he was often repelled by what he saw of India's religious and social ceremonies, and set out to reform them. He did not, therefore, foster their portrayal in art, and the style declined.

The authors are agreed that no real artistic merit can be assigned to this style, but they conclude that it was the Indian-British school which first "frankly accepted villagers, workers, and servants, village ceremonies and rituals, as proper subjects for art." They suggest that modern Indian artists such as Jamini Roy and Amrita Sher-Gil derive their social viewpoint and their treatment of proletarian subjects from this school. This conclusion is not borne out by the history of Indian art. Folk artists in India had always been primarily artists of the people, receiving support and maintenance from their village communities in return for their art. Their themes portrayed the life they saw around them, that of the ordinary man, his everyday activities, his feasts and his festivals. They were conscious, too, of the joys and sorrows of the people they painted, and often their work was an outcry against the social injustice of the times. Folk art, closely related to ordinary life, exists even today among such primitive tribes as the Gonds and the Nagas, who continue their ancient traditions unaffected by alien trends. It is to this earlier origin that contemporary Indian painters revert in their preoccupation with the village scene and the common man.

The impact of European style on Indian painting, as depicted by the Indian-British school, lies in the category of imitation rather than assimilation. Therefore it has made no constructive contribution to Indian art. The style grew up in response to a particular patronage. The subjects it chose, too, were those that interested its British patrons rather than those conceived and imaginatively executed by the artists themselves. They dealt with the dramatic, such as the "hook-swinging ceremony" and "suttee," as frequently as with the ordinary. There was no free traffic between the European and Indian styles. Their awkward blend is more vividly observed when contrasted with the impact of the Moghul school on Indian art. The Moslem invasions in India at first imposed revolutionary changes on Indian paintings, but as soon as the Moslems ceased to be foreigners and became Indians their art was assimilated in India. Through the patronage of their courts and nobility, an art that was a blend of the Hindu and Moghul styles was born, utterly different in conception

THE INTIMATE SKETCHBOOKS OF GEORGES BRAQUE

Introductory Texts by
Will Grohmann
and
Rebecca West

Braque's *carnets de travail* had never previously been shown to anyone until the artist recently allowed his close friend Monsieur Tériade, the Paris art publisher, to examine them. M. Tériade was so impressed by the quality of the drawings that he persuaded Braque to agree to their publication. The **100 drawings** selected by Braque and Tériade have been reproduced by Draeger and are here published for the first time in the new number (No. 31–32) of **VERVE.** In addition to the drawings there are **20 lithographs in colour** printed by Mourlot, and a special cover and title-page designed by the artist.

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and style from any that India had hitherto produced, yet truly Indian because it had been the spontaneous assimilation of another school whose own artists and patrons had themselves been absorbed into the fabric of Indian life.

The Indian-British school is, however, important as a phase of Indian art—possessing historical rather than artistic merit, as the book's admirable collection of illustrations bear out. Like machine-made goods, railways, and other products of the Industrial Revolution it was brought wholesale to India from abroad. But while the Industrial Revolution was necessary to progress, this style, superimposed on a country whose own artistic tradition had achieved its summit centuries before the birth of academies with their rules and regulations, contributed nothing to India's creative endeavour. No significant result could, therefore, accrue from it.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

Frescoes Without Walls

Goya: the Frescos in San Antonio de la Florida in Madrid. By ENRIQUE LAFUENTE FERRARI. Geneva: Skira; London: Zwemmer. £5 5s.

THE frescoes in the cupola of the Church of San Antonio de la Florida are perhaps the last expression of the Baroque—or, rather, the last paintings to be conceived quite naturally in the tradition, as distinct from such conscious exercises as the Delacroix frescoes at St. Sulpice. At the same time, their ultimate effect, as in all Goya's work, is a denial of Baroque—one might say, almost a purification of it. Thus the first conception, as shown in the sketch, is perfectly straightforward Baroque. The sky is treated in a Tiepolesque manner, the accent being on what is taking place there: the crowd is subservient to the miracle, helpless spectators of an overpowering event. In carrying out the painting, Goya must have become suddenly bored with this effect and changed the centre of gravity. The figures become related dramatically among themselves; the sky loses space, and anonymous park-like trees in muted colours simply serve to set off the human drama.

The ambivalence of Goya's position in regard to the Baroque could be explained by saying that Goya's style derives from an impatient use of what was to hand—like not being fussy about what kind of pencil he was using. It cannot be said that he originated a style, rather, that given styles were used by him with overpowering personality. In this sense he belongs to his own time, though Ferrari, in his essay, would have us believe that he was born out of his time, that he was "the first expressionist." All great art is "expressive," and goes to the heart of the matter—but expressionism is a style in which there must be the element of symbolism: it is this, and not looseness of handling, that is primordial and essential.

The frequent use of words like "expressionistic" and "modernistic" is symptomatic of Ferrari's anxiety—shared by many of Goya's admirers—to neglect his relation to the 18th century in order to show him as a man of the future. Apart from any question of accuracy, is it even flattering to a great artist to tear him, in a fury of Malraux-esque rhetoric, out of his age, to denigrate all his predecessors and contemporaries, plaster him with a few contradictory labels, and call him the first of the moderns? But perhaps this is only to be expected in a writer whose knowledge of art and æsthetic theory before Goya allows him to say: "At one swoop he destroyed the superstitious cult of *fidelity to nature*" (my italics).

What is surprising is that this view of Goya should be maintained in an essay on a work in which the artist's debt to his predecessors is exceptionally marked—the very reason, perhaps, why it is not often spoken of as one of his major works, does not altogether fit into the Goya we admire. Yet Goya lived most of his life in the 18th century, and we must see him firmly as an 18th century artist. During his formative years, two great styles were opposed to each other—Baroque, dying in the splendour of a Tiepolo sunset, and Neo-classicism, which had essentially more vitality because its cult of purity-simplicity-severity was more in harmony with incipient ideas of progress and reform. It was Goya's special genius that he managed to utilise both these styles, antagonistic as they were, in the creation of an altogether personal style.

The tearing of Goya's work out of its context in time is almost duplicated in terms of space in the way the colour reproductions are quite arbitrarily cut about and presented. When one remembers the distance these paintings have to be viewed from, the relation of the colour to the architecture, a certain unreality enters into reproductions of this sort. It is exciting to see Goya's treatment of form, his drawing with its quick calligraphic strokes, in close-up, if one bears in mind that this is *not* the effect of the work as seen by the spectator in the Church. It might have been useful to have added some rather ordinary black-and-white photographs to give an idea of the scale and the relation of Goya's forms to the classical architecture.

Ramon Stolz's little essay on the technical aspects of the frescoes is very interesting, modestly written, and informative.

Rodrigo Moynihan

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Seeing as Action

Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye. By RUDOLF ARNHEIM. Faber and Faber. 63s.

"A weeping willow does not look sad because it looks like a sad person. It is more adequate to say that since the shape, direction, and flexibility of willow branches convey the expression of passive hanging, a comparison with the structurally similar state of mind and body that we call sadness imposes itself secondarily."

So much for empathy; so much, too, for symbolism unless we care to regard such Platonic representatives of Sadness as symbolic. Since he places "true" expressiveness "out there," entirely innocent of pathetic fallacy, Professor Arnheim urges his readers to regard basic expression as something revealed in the very act of perception, a result neither of association nor of conditioning. This view grows from a Gestalt-derived conviction that "the impact of the forces transmitted by a visual pattern is an intrinsic part of the percept, just as shape and colour." Moreover, Professor Arnheim tells us, the cerebral activity that registers vision probably proceeds from a structure in whose working there is a tension parallel to that of the perceived "forces" themselves.

Already the reader will want to know what æsthetic attitude is either supported by, or responsible for, such a view. He may be surprised when the author insists that his theory does not encourage expressionism in art; that "a projective pouring out of what is felt inside" is not desirable; nor, equally, a concentration upon formal patterns. The student should fix on the model's expressiveness, since it will be an attribute of something enduring and general. I find it plainer, however, when on the subject of the dance Professor Arnheim tends to draw instances from what we have no hesitation in calling, over here, expressionist dancing. On the other hand, he finds the human figure "overloaded with non-visual associations . . . not easily reduced to the simplicity of shape and motion that transmits compelling expression."

Most of these quotations are lifted from the last pages of this massive book: they are by no means indicative of value in the detail. On the golf course, some spectators might choose to watch a superlative one-armed player who can in a small degree contrive from his limitation an advantage. Over short distances, as it were, Professor Arnheim often shows unusual mastery both in scientific perceptiveness and in æsthetic sensibility. Thus, his dicta on Henry Moore's sculpture comprise an undoubted contribution; there are analyses of paintings by Giotto, El Greco, Chirico, and Ingres which should be

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consulted by any interested person: there is a plenitude of vital asides: the author has much to say that is excellent on the subject of modern art, occasionally also on the history of art. For instance he argues, convincingly I think, that the use of central perspective from the time of the Renaissance "has the paradoxical effect of emancipating the artist, by the truthfulness of its distortions, from the objective correctness of shape and size, and thus breaks the ground for the freedom of modern art."

Presumably "objective correctness" points to the simplified perceptions that the Gestalt psychologists have shown to be preferred, and indeed constructed, by the plainer acts of vision. Professor Arnheim reminds us from page to page, particularly in the early chapters headed Balance, Shape, Form, Growth, that "seeing is the perception of action" (introducing parallel action in the brain). There is tension or pull in any position of a circle within a square: at the centre there exists a balance of pulls. "Every visual pattern is dynamic." Professor Arnheim systematises the language used by artists when indicating balance, stress and strain, weight, movement, in a design. They may find the rationalisation to be fruitful, not least the first pronouncement of Gestalt: "Any stimulus pattern tends to be seen in such a way that the resulting structure is as simple as the given conditions permit." Assisted by very numerous diagrams, Professor Arnheim displays much acuteness in such matters as the increased weight attributed to the upper halves of compositions, ascending and descending diagonal, and the need for weight on the left in pictorial composition. He establishes again the relevance to æsthetic criticism of experiments with perception and of children's drawings. On the other hand, whereas on one page the author's self-imposed disability is of no consequence, on the next it appears crippling. Moreover since visual art, according to Professor Arnheim, is solely the elaboration of *visual* perception, he will tolerate no influence even from the other senses. His argument concerning kinæsthetic æsthetic sensations is notably specious and he would have no truck—it is doubtful if he has heard about it—with the tactile values so familiar in European criticism. There is no mention of texture except, very occasionally, as a subsidiary clarification of pattern: it follows that the author has little to say about architecture where the range between smooth and rough is in such evidence; and it is no surprise that the section on colour—it *is* a surprise, though, that the author more than once talks of a bluish-yellow—should be the weakest in the book, without any proper relevance to art, nor, it seems, to science. He confuses glow with glitter. I was disappointed not to find mention here of the coloured patterns seen by closed eyes, patterns which have been thought under certain circumstances to mirror structural elements in the eye itself.

The lack of attention to the subject of texture is a serious fault. Even in a lengthy bibliography Professor Arnheim reveals no awareness of the work of his fellow-American, Arnold Gesell, whose well-organised behaviourist experiments upon infants and children in regard to the close inter-relation of sight with touch, and with kinæsthesia (tonic-neck reflex), have enjoyed wide acceptance among psychologists of every other school. In a recent book Gesell wrote of an infant: "Almost literally, he picks up the object with his eyes, drops it and picks it up again. This is truly a form of ocular prehension, a forerunner of manual prehension," and, I would add, a follower of oral prehension.

In one sentence Professor Arnheim does remark on the prehensory character of vision. We will feel it to be a lapse, since emotion supported by another sense disturbs the meaning he treasures of the pure act of seeing. But I must repeat I find his point of view often helpful æsthetically, in the matter of constancy of shape, for instance, and of isometric and frontal perspective so widely used in the past. However, vision, prehensory or no, is to him so active that I doubt whether the verb "to contemplate" will be found in these many pages. It is as if the symphonies, piano concertos, and other popular, heroic items by Beethoven were music, or even his music, entire. Luckily this is not so: there are other tendencies no less strong: there is the desire in the artist that the pattern should not only be active and "easy on the eye" but self-contained, existing for itself and thereby becoming an object of our contemplation which ascribes to it a sufficiency that encircles the action there. Similarly, despite Gestalt psychology, the attention of the artist (and of the spectator) before his subject tends in certain important moments to be diffuse, as Dr. Ehrenzweig has pointed out. Thus, the artist may prefer a relationship between figure and background that from a Gestalt point of view is muddled: the contemplation of nature that gives full value to actual *chiaroscuro* is an example, though it may provide a novel form of simplification. The unit, however, the figure, has changed radically; the artist is now annihilating Gestalt distinctions of superficial perception in his search for an embracing Whole with which we can merge. Professor Arnheim is sensitive to neither of these contrasting yet complementary æsthetic rôles for the object. But though it will be hazardous to describe artistic creation solely as

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an extended form of the mechanism of perception, such wooing of the senses will tend to have salubrious repercussions on criticism. Having nurtured a grain of truth with remarkable resource, Professor Arnheim has produced a work of considerable importance and originality.

Adrian Stokes

Quick Symbols

Graphis Annual, 1955–6. Zürich: Amstutz and Herdeg, Graphic Press. London: Sylvan Press. 70s.
Modern Publicity, 1955–6. Studio Publications; 35s.

THE relation of the modern artist and writer to the 20th century is a set-piece for intellectuals who never tire of nominating artists who make the most of the age *versus* those who try to avoid it. There has been a great deal of loose talk about grain silos and architecture, pylons in poetry, and *Angst* in novels. But the kind of art which really is the product of the 20th century is habitually ignored or disparaged. It is usual to define modern art in terms of experiment, integrity, and individualism: so massive are these terms that it is hard to see anything apart from them but the sell-out. However, beyond the narrow limits of art lie what is variously called graphic art, commercial art, applied art.

Every year panoramic books—such as the Swiss *Graphis Annual* and the English *Modern Publicity*—show how narrow is the negative estimate of commercial art. Each book contains hundreds of reproductions of posters, press advertisements, brochures, and packaging. This year's annuals confirm the somewhat heretical idea that the ads communicate as wide a range of visual experience as any imaginary museum. Here is a wide-open arc of degrees of abstraction with intricate relations of word and picture, emblems, diagrams, motion-studies, and what have you. To some extent this rhetoric derives from Bauhaus ideas about communication through dynamic display but it also comes from the social and physical conditions of urban life —with its profusion of sensory experiences. After all, the simultaneity of newspaper lay-outs antedates the foundation of the Bauhaus.

Critics who neglect the native roots of advertising tend to overestimate the influence of fine art on the popular arts. It is true that there are numerous examples of popular adaptations of modern art; but this is not the whole story. The cubism of Cassandre and McKnight Kauffer was admired between the wars and certainly the style continues embalmed in orthodox international posters. Many of the intentionally "improving" posters were derived from highly formalised originals. Modern ads, however, tend to a freer play of colours and a very free linearism. From a formal point of view these lines and planes are arbitrary: they take their character from the messages to be sent, rather than from an æsthetic of form. Images rather than forms, signs rather than patterns, mark post-war advertising.

These images and signs have an intense—if limited—cogency. It is too often assumed that ads only sell goods—that the clients who pay for them are monster capitalists milking a rabble public who are lured to buy by "young females disporting themselves in opulent surroundings" (Aldous Huxley). However, though it is true that ads move goods—which non-revolutionaries ought to regard as an economic necessity—their communicative function does not end there. Ads define the topical, and goods are only a part of this: styles of dress, grouping of furniture, choice of companions, and so on, contribute to the definition of the current folkloristic family of man. Movies, radio, TV, newspapers, and the editorials of magazines support this function. This cluster of popular art-forms give us some of the symbols by which we organise the environment we live in. Unlike lyrical poems and fine art which is supposed to be "built for eternity," all the popular arts are expendable. This time-perspective is missed by the supporters of Cassandre and Kauffer who praise these artists for giving popular art *some* of the dignity of the fine arts. The London Advertising Creative Circle who staged an exhibition of "Art in British Advertising" last year revealed a similar prejudice by putting the emphasis on art as something permanent rather than expendable.

Both *Graphis Annual* and *Modern Publicity* are visual in appeal, with merely perfunctory introductions. *Graphis* is pleasant to look at and concerned almost exclusively with slick design. *Modern Publicity* includes a slightly wider stylistic range but is monotonous in lay-out (like a stamp-album). Neither the Swiss editors, Walter Herdeg and Charles Rosner, nor the English editor, Frank A. Mercer, admit much in the way of sex or detergents. But even within the squeamish limits of sophistication there is an extraordinary range of styles. We all choose between these styles not only according to the goods and services we are interested in but according to our ability to read the signs. What is remarkable is that a mass audience, divided as it is by class, age-group, nationality, and personality, yet has this enormous vocabulary to choose from. The world changes shape according to which map projection is used. So from all these publicly accessible symbolic forms the mass audience can experience different world-views. This stretching of the capacity to read symbols —with its consequent enlargement of perception

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—is a great achievement of our technological mass-production culture. It is an achievement that our concern with traditionally defined reading habits and our snobbish assumptions about art have combined to hide.

Lawrence Alloway

The Loved One

Picasso. By WILHELM BOECK and JAIME SABARTÉS. Thames and Hudson. £5 5s.

ILLUSTRATED art books have tended to become so expensive since the war that it seems possible that people now buy them only after they have acquired their second yacht. This new book on Picasso, however, though it costs a lot of money, is almost cheap at the price. It contains, besides a long essay on the artist, a detailed study of his work, and some useful documentation, over 600 reproductions, 44 of them in colour. The illustrations are extremely well-chosen, and the black-and-white ones are excellently printed. Turning over these pages, following the rapid succession of images in all the brilliant variety of their forms and moods, all their marvellous range of fancy, is an experience as enjoyable as the world of illustrated books can offer. This, moreover, is the way Picasso's art is best enjoyed—that is to say, in large doses, taken at high speed. For, if Picasso is a great artist, he is the only great artist whose individual works do not gain from prolonged contemplation. Again and again the beauty and magic of his images touch upon a nerve—and fail to keep up the pressure. Picasso, unlike Bonnard and Matisse and Soutine among his contemporaries, never, in my experience, creates a beauty so profound as to be difficult to bear.

The present volume is probably the most comprehensive monograph on Picasso that has been published. This is saying a good deal: even allowing for the fact that artists get wider publicity today than ever before in history, the quantity of literature that has appeared on Picasso is astounding. His appeal to writers on art cannot be explained merely by pointing to his immense impact on the cultural consciousness of our time, for, while it is true that much of what has been written has been produced in answer to a demand occasioned by his renown, the renown itself was built up through what had been written. Before *Vogue* there had to be Cocteau, and before Cocteau, Apollinaire.

The reason why Picasso has been a subject beloved of writers since almost the outset of his career is, I think, twofold: his art lends itself readily to explanation and interpretation at several different levels; and his personality is, by all accounts, so remarkable and vital as to be as provocative as, say, Chaplin's, of both gossip and personal eulogy. The present volume operates on both fronts, Boeck contributing the discussion of his art, and Sabartés, his private secretary, that of his personality.

Sabartés has had the more delicate task. Picasso seems to be one of those men (Lord Beaverbrook is another) whose friends seem unable to pay him a personal tribute without gushing like enamoured schoolgirls. Even Kahnweiler, whose memoir of his friend Juan Gris is so moving because of the restraint with which it articulates personal devotion, tends to lose his head when he is writing of Picasso. And Sabartés seems without reserve either in his admiration or in his expression of it. ("Picasso, like all mortals, has been," he tells us, "ill several times.")

Boeck gives us the view of Picasso as an artist that has become current since the war—that of "*Picasso bon maître de la liberté*" (to cite the title which Eluard gave another of those embarrassing personal eulogies). One of the interesting features of the vast body of literature on Picasso is the gradual shift of emphasis along the lines indicated by Kahnweiler when he said, in a recent interview published in *L'Oeil*, that cubism had seemed at first to be a means to discipline but now appeared to have been a means to freedom. The austere, intellectual, anti-impressionist, anti-romantic Picasso of the early writings of Kahnweiler and Raynal became, between the wars, the witch-doctor, weaver of spells and liberator of the unconscious, created by Breton and Eluard, and has now become the existentialist and quasi-expressionist of Argan's brilliantly penetrating essay on the sculptures. Boeck, in sorry contrast to Argan, says little to deepen our understanding of the artist. And if his more painstaking, less speculative approach makes Barr, rather than Argan, a suitable standard for comparison, it has to be said that he lacks Barr's incisive historical sense as well as his unassuming ease of manner.

David Sylvester

Prison or Stronghold?

Fritz Wotruba. By ELIAS CANETTI. Foreword by James S. Plaut. Vienna: Verlag Bruder Rosenbaum. 21s.

IT CANNOT be easy to be a monumental sculptor in Vienna. The whole city is of course, in one sense, a vast museum of applied sculpture; and it has, in the Raphael Donner fountain, one of the finest groups to be found outside Italy. But amenity and magniloquence are the two extremes to which public sculpture has always tended in Vienna, and our taste now favours

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neither. Nor is Austria proud, in general, of its more adventurous artists; I remember the scorn with which one high official pointed, some two years ago, to a project for the safety-curtain in the rebuilt Staatsoper. "We can't have that sort of thing," he said, and in due course a careful representation of the Orpheus legend (incorporating, it is said, a quantity of real gold paint) was commissioned and installed.

The despised sketch was from the hand of Fritz Wotruba, who is known in this country from his exhibition at the Hanover Gallery in 1951, from open-air shows at Battersea and Holland Park, and from the bronze figurine of 1950 in the Tate Gallery. Wotruba was born in Vienna in 1907, and he is now in charge of the sculpture-school in the Akademia der Bildenden Kunst. His career in Vienna itself was interrupted by a seven-year period (1938–45) in Switzerland, and it may be significant that the present book, which was issued to coincide with a travelling exhibition in North and South America, contains nothing from the years 1931 to 1945. There is no question that, both as an artist and as a man, Wotruba is leaving his mark on Vienna. Already three of his works may be classed as public monuments (in the Silbergasse, in the Gänsehäufel, and on the staircase that leads to the Albertina), and he himself, so remote in character and activity from the traditional easy-going Viennese, has a personal prestige of the rarest kind.

His friend Elias Canetti describes him as "a black panther thrown among men," and it is true that his mingling of Czech and Hungarian blood makes for the intensity and directness of feeling that mark, for instance, his squat and purposeful *Walking Man* (1952). But in general this description, though perhaps appropriate to certain elements in Wotruba's personal character, seems to me to give no idea at all of the nature of his work. Wotruba's sculpture is concerned, as I see it, with purely human attributes; and the first of these is a colossal patience. There are seated figures in this book which are Endurance personified—and not endurance merely, but a sort of purposeful relaxation which may turn at any moment into strenuous and untiring activity. When Wotruba's figures get on to their broad squab feet it is clear that there will be no stopping them and that, with their curious block-like construction, they are not merely armoured but armoured all through: breast and breast-plate are one. In this context the use of stone, to which Mr. Canetti so eloquently calls our attention, has a double significance. The sculptor has had, we feel, an altogether exceptional struggle with his material; the combat has been as terrible as any with which life will confront the finished figure. The

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stone will, in fact, offer to ourselves the same rude and unyielding resistance that Wotruba has had to vanquish.

It is clear from the politely Hellenistic torso of 1930 that Wotruba has, or once had, that feeling for significant elongation which has haunted sculptors from the time of the Egyptians to that of Giacometti. But in the work of his maturity mankind is short and sturdy (Mr. Canetti might himself have served as a model for some of these figures); and, so far from stretching upwards through space, it crouches, or sits, or strides forward on shortened calves. It keeps close to the ground, as if to ward off some impending disaster. In Wotruba's bronze or limestone reliefs, the figures emerge as little as possible from the material, seeming rather to sink back into its darkness than to crave the outer air. Mr. Canetti argues, most plausibly, that the message of Wotruba's figures is that "Man is his own prison"; but it seems to me that they have also the character of a rock-bound sanctuary, the last stronghold, it might be, of man.

Certain of his single heads betray an extreme sensibility for portraiture; but it is in the recumbent figures that Wotruba reveals himself in what, in any other artist, might be called a strain of romantic tragedy. The *Large Reclining Woman* of 1951 is, as Mr. Canetti remarks, "a miracle of modern sculpture." Where normally his figures crouch, bow low, hug themselves, or clench their component parts together, this life-size figure sprawls in watchful abandon. Ruin and re-birth are mysteriously combined in this noble creation, which is now in the Viennese municipal collections.

The congratulations due to Mr. Canetti and his subject cannot be extended to the Brothers Rosenbaum, who have failed both to identify the plates, which must be traced back to the index, and to ensure that the titles used by Mr. Canetti correspond to those used elsewhere in the book for the same works.

John Russell

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